NATION
Floods wreck Northeast states
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Sensex ends lower by 77.26 points
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SPORTS
Novak Djokovic clocks his 100th win at French Open
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SALAR
DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

سالار روزنامہ بنگلور

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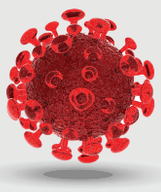


INDIA REPORTS NEARLY 4,000 COVID CASES

Delhi High Court has observed the Covid pandemic is far from over as it asked for details on the Centre's preparedness to deal with the rising infection. The no. of cases stand at:

- 3,961 active in India
- 1,435 in Kerala. Highest across nation
- 506 in Maharashtra
- 483 in Delhi
- 311 in K'taka

>>>More on Pages 2 & 4

NEET PG postponed, revised date to be announced soon

Decision after SC direction that exam be held in single shift

NEW DELHI, 2 JUNE

The National Board of Examinations in Medical Sciences (NBEMS) on Monday announced the postponement of NEET PG 2025, originally scheduled for 15 June. The move comes just days after the Supreme Court directed that the exam be held in a single shift to ensure transparency and uniformity.

In its official notice, the NBEMS stated that the exam has been deferred to allow time for identifying additional test centres and establishing the necessary infrastructure. A revised date will be announced shortly.

The decision follows a Supreme Court order on Friday, where a bench led by Justice Vikram Nath, along with Justices Sanjay Kumar and N.V. Anjaria, emphasised that conducting the examination in two shifts leads to inherent arbitrariness.

"We are not ready to accept that, given the technological advancement and available infrastructure across the country, the examining body could not conduct NEET PG in one shift," the bench observed.

The apex court highlighted the issue of inconsistency in question difficulty across different shifts, noting that no two papers can be perfectly identical in ease or difficulty. It also pointed out that with more than two weeks left before the exam, there was adequate time to arrange for additional centres.

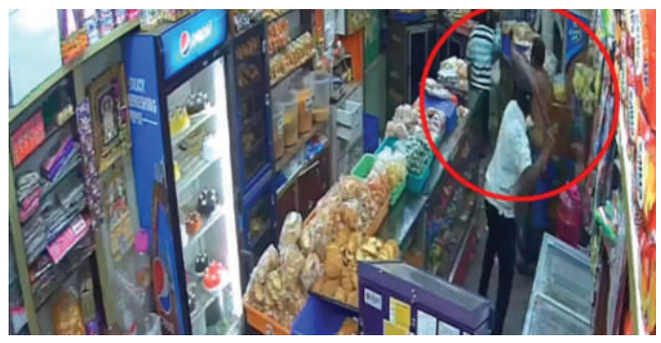
NEET has faced widespread protests since June 2024 over alleged NEET-UG paper leaks, with similar claims about NEET-PG. While the government denied the leaks, students have demanded the rollback of the national medical entrance exams **PHOTO: ANI**

- NEET PG is a crucial exam for admissions to postgraduate medical programmes including MD, MS, and PG diploma courses.

The court was responding to a petition filed against the NBEMS's 16 April notification, which proposed conducting NEET PG in two shifts. Petitioners argued that this format posed risks of unfairness due to varying question difficulty, flaws in the normalisation process, and increased stress on candidates.

NEET PG is a crucial exam for admissions to postgraduate medical programmes including MD, MS, and PG diploma courses. This year, 2,42,678 candidates have applied.

NBEMS reassured that the revised exam date will be notified soon, as it works to comply with the court's directive and ensure fairness in the exam process. —Agencies



In the CCTV footage, the victim can be heard screaming and running into the bakery as the 10 accused chase him **PHOTO: SCREENGRAB**

Man hacked to death by 7 in Koppal bakery

KOPPAL, 2 JUNE

A thirty-five-year-old man was hacked to death by a group of miscreants inside a bakery shop over alleged enmity and a property dispute in Koppal, police said on Monday.

The incident, which occurred in Tavaragera town of Kushtagi taluk on 31 May, was captured on a CCTV camera.

In the footage that has now gone viral on social media, Chanappa Narinal can be heard screaming and running into the bakery as the ten accused chase him. He was allegedly beaten up and attacked with machetes by the group inside the bakery.

He was also allegedly hit on his head with a wooden log. After the incident, the accused fled the spot.

"Out of the 10 people involved in the murder, we have arrested seven of them, including the four who attacked the man. Efforts are on to nab the remaining three accused who instigated them to attack the victim," Koppal Superintendent of Police LR Arasiddi said. During interrogation, the accused told police that a family dispute prevailing after the 2022 town panchayat elections led to the attack. Prima facie appears to be the result of an old enmity and ongoing property dispute, police said. —PTI

Tesla not interested in making EVs in India: HDK

NEW DELHI, 2 JUNE

Global EV giant Tesla is not interested in manufacturing cars in India but keen on establishing showrooms in the country, Union Heavy Industries Minister HD Kumaraswamy said on Monday. US President Donald Trump has said that if Tesla were to build a factory in India to circumvent that country's tariffs, it would be "unfair" to the US. The Minister made the remarks at a press conference to announce the unveiling of guidelines for the Scheme to Promote Manufacturing of Electric Cars in India. Tesla CEO billionaire Elon Musk had said in April last year that his visit to India has been delayed due to the company's heavy obligations. —PTI

>>>More on Page 7

Shukla set to become acting BCCI President

NEW DELHI, 2 JUNE

Veteran cricket administrator Rajeev Shukla is set to replace Roger Binny as BCCI President in an interim capacity after the latter turns 70 next month, BCCI sources told PTI on Monday. Binny, who had replaced Sourav Ganguly as the Board president in 2022, turns 70 on 19 July, crossing the age-limit threshold for a BCCI office-bearer. Shukla, 65, is currently serving as the BCCI vice-president, a post he has held since 2020. He would be the active BCCI chief until fresh elections are held during the body's AGM in September. —PTI

>>>More on Page 8

Trump-backed Nawrocki wins Poland Prez polls

WARSAW, 2 JUNE

Conservative Karol Nawrocki won Poland's weekend Presidential runoff election, according to the final vote count on Monday. Nawrocki won 50.89 per cent of votes in a very tight race against liberal Warsaw Mayor Rafal Trzaskowski, who received 49.11 per cent. Nawrocki will succeed Andrzej Duda, a conservative whose second and final term ends on 6 August. The outcome indicates that Poland will take a more nationalist path under its new leader. Nawrocki was notably backed by US President Donald Trump and welcomed to the White House a month ago. —PTI

>>>More on Page 6

Anna University sexual assault accused gets life term

CHENNAI, 2 JUNE

A Mahila Court on Monday sentenced Gnanasekaran, convicted in the Anna University sexual harassment case, to life imprisonment for a minimum of 30 years without the possibility of remission.

Mahila Court judge M Rajalakshmi, who convicted him on 28 May, delivered sentences on each of the 11 charges proved by the prosecution. The sentences will run concurrently.

The court held that the prosecution had proved the charges beyond reasonable doubt in the case that triggered public outrage and a political row in Tamil Nadu in December 2024.

The case emerged after the victim lodged a complaint at the All-Women Police Station in Kotturpuram on 23 December, alleging that Gnanasekaran had threatened her and sexually harassed her on the university campus.

The accused, reportedly posing as university staff, also recorded the incident and used the footage to blackmail the victim.

Chief Minister M K Stalin welcomed the verdict, noting that the state had recently amended laws to disallow remission for sexual offences. Gnanasekaran had been accused of links to the ruling DMK, but the party denied he was a member. —PTI

>>>More on Page 4

Gnanasekaran **PHOTO: X**

3 jawans dead in Sikkim landslide

Rescue operation underway after a landslide hit a military camp at Chhaten in Sikkim on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

GANGTOK, 2 JUNE

Three army personnel died and six soldiers went missing after a landslide hit a military camp at Chhaten in Sikkim, a defence official said on Monday.

The landslide, which occurred at 7 pm on Sunday near Lachen town in Mangan district, was triggered by heavy rainfall in the area, he said.

Bodies of the personnel have been recovered, while four other soldiers were rescued with minor injuries, the official said. —PTI

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Kamal Haasan seeks K'taka HC protection for 'Thug Life' release

BENGALURU, 2 JUNE

Actor Kamal Haasan has approached the Karnataka High Court seeking protection for the smooth release of his upcoming film 'Thug Life' in the State, amid calls for a boycott by the Karnataka Film Chamber of Commerce (KFCC).

The KFCC recently declared it would not permit the film's screening unless Haasan issues a public apology for remarks made during a Chennai promotional event, where he suggested Kannada evolved from Tamil. The film is scheduled for release on 5 June.

In the petition, Haasan's production house Raaj Kamal Films said the comment was made in a spirit of unity and respect between Tamil Nadu and Karnataka and was taken out of context. It noted that Kannada actor Shiva Rajkumar, present during the event, had also defended Haasan's intent.

The plea sought a directive restraining any individual, group, or authority, including the KFCC and government officials, from obstructing the screening. It also requested police protection for filmmakers, theatre owners, actors, and audiences.

Raaj Kamal Films stated that the film has a budget of around Rs 300 crore, and audiences in Karnataka are awaiting its release. 'Thug Life' is directed by Mani Ratnam and stars Haasan, Trisha Krishnan, and Silambarasan TR, with music by AR Rahman. —PTI

>>>More on Page 2

Flight hit by bird at 4,000ft, makes emergency landing

RANCHI, 2 JUNE

An IndiGo flight carrying approximately 175 passengers experienced a bird strike, prompting an emergency landing at Birsa Munda Airport in Ranchi on Monday. Fortunately, all passengers and crew members were reported safe, although the Airbus A320 sustained damage from the impact.

According to RR Maurya, the Director of Birsa Munda Airport, the incident occurred at around 1:14 PM, while the flight was approximately 10 to 12 nautical miles from the airport and flying at an altitude of 3,000 to 4,000 feet. The aircraft was travelling from Patna to Ranchi and was scheduled to continue to Kolkata.

The aircraft was struck by a vulture, causing noticeable damage. Engineers are currently assessing the extent of the dent on the aircraft. An IndiGo spokesperson confirmed the bird strike and stated that the pilot adhered to all safety protocols during the incident.

Following the emergency landing, the aircraft has been grounded for the time being. The safety of passengers remains the priority, and further investigations are expected regarding the bird strike incident. —PTI

EE SALA CUP YARDU?

Will RCB's wait for IPL trophy end today?

ROYAL CHALLENGERS BENGALURU AND PUNJAB KINGS ARE SET TO SCRIPT HISTORY TOMORROW, AS ONE OF THEM WILL LIFT THE IPL TROPHY FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 18 YEARS. NEITHER SIDE HAS EVER WON THE TITLE

NOT SO LUCKY PREVIOUSLY

RCB: 3-time finalists (2009, 2011, 2016) NEVER WON

PBKS 1-time finalist (2014) NEVER WON

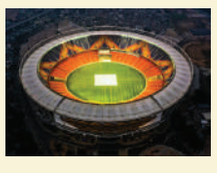
HEAD-TO-HEAD RECORD

	RCB	PBKS
Matches played	36	36
Wins	18	18
Highest score	241	232

IN IPL 2025

3	2	1
matches played	RCB won	PBKS won

Venue: **NARENDRA MODI STADIUM,** Ahmedabad | Time: 7.30pm



TOP PERFORMERS

RCB
Virat Kohli
614 runs
Josh Hazlewood
21 wkts

PBKS
Shreyas Iyer
603 runs
Arshdeep Singh
18 wkts

>>>More on Pages 5 & 8

Gukesh stuns Carlsen in Norway Chess thriller

STAVANGER, 2 JUNE

World Champion D Gukesh scored a sensational maiden classical victory over Magnus Carlsen at the Norway Chess Tournament, capitalising on a rare blunder by the world no.1 in Round 6. The dramatic four-hour encounter ended with Carlsen visibly frustrated, banging his fist on the board after the stunning reversal.

The 19-year-old Indian climbed to third place with 8.5 points, just one point behind joint leaders Carlsen and Fabiano Caruana. "99 out of 100 times I would lose… just a lucky day," Gukesh remarked, admitting Carlsen was in control for most of the game until a time scramble saw him drop his knight.

Gukesh remained composed throughout, quietly acknowledging the moment after Carlsen shook hands and exited in frustration. The win marked a strong comeback for Gukesh, who had lost to Carlsen in Round 1. Coach Grzegorz Gajewski said the result would boost Gukesh's confidence, crediting improved time management. "Once you've done it, you know you can do it again," he added. —PTI

Magnus Carlsen loses his cool after a defeat to India's D Gukesh at Norway Chess, banging his fist on the table

K'taka, M'rashtra spar over Almatti dam

DyCM asks Union Ministers to safeguard State's interests, says increasing dam height is a right

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah at Vidhana Soudha on Monday *PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD*

BENGALURU, 2 JUNE

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar slammed Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis for objecting to increasing the height of the Almatti dam. He called upon Union Ministers and MPs from Karnataka to safeguard the State's interests.

"Fadnavis had written a letter to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on 9 May raising objections to increasing the height of Almatti dam. Stating that Sangli and Kolhapur districts would face flooding if the height of the dam is raised, the letter has asked us to re-evaluate the plan," Shivakumar, who also holds the Irrigation portfolio, said at Vidhana Soudha. "This letter is a shock to us. Maharashtra had not raised any issues when the Tribunal passed its judgement in 2010."

Shivakumar said increasing the height was the State's right. "As per the Krishna Tribunal's order, Karnataka can increase the height of Almatti dam to 524m.

"Almatti project is needed for the State but we don't want friction with our neighbour. The cost escalation is due to the delay in this project. We would need Rs 1 lakh crore for land acquisition," he said.

Hemavathi link canal violence

Shivakumar also condemned the violence over the Hemavathi link canal project, where at least 13 FIRs were registered, including against Opposition MLAs. He called it a "political stunt".

The protest on 31 May saw the participation of Opposition leaders and farmer groups. Locals are concerned that the Rs 1,000 crore project would threaten the water supply to Tumakuru's agricultural heartland by rerouting the water elsewhere.

"I will reveal at the right time what the blackmail and demands of these protesters are," Shivakumar said. "It is a lie that Hemavathi water is being diverted to Bengaluru South…This project is specifically for the benefit of Kunigal taluk, which has received just 3.3 TMC of its rightful share…. When Tumakuru receives water from Krishna and Cauvery, why deny Hemavathi water to Kunigal?"

—Salar News with Agencies

Flooding in Maharashtra is their internal matter and they need to fix it. We will meet the PM and the Union Jal Shakthi Minister and put pressure regarding this

-DK Shivakumar, Irrigation and Water Minister

Filing cases against farmers is an unforgivable offense. The government should hold discussions with farmers to find a resolution...The State government must call an all-party meeting from both districts, make a decision, and withdraw the cases

-R Ashoka, Leader of Opposition in State Legislative Assembly

World Environment Day: GBA to launch climate initiatives

BENGALURU, 2 JUNE

The Greater Bengaluru Act's (GBA) Climate Action Cell is set to unveil significant climate initiatives on 6 June, coinciding with the annual observance of World Environment Day. A press statement from Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) indicated that the event will gather government representatives, educators, institutions, students, and citizens to underscore the critical importance of climate action and local leadership. This year's theme, "combating plastic pollution," aims to tackle the pressing issue of plastic waste. 15 winners will be announced on 5 June. Additionally, the website for youth-led Climate Action Clubs, which aim to promote climate awareness among young people, will go live on 6 June. *—PTI*

PHOTO: XXX

Chikkaballapur man held for using sword to cut cake

CHIKKABALLAPUR, 2 JUNE

The Gauribidanuru rural police have arrested auto driver Anil Kumar, 24, for reportedly using a sword-like-object to cut a cake while celebrating his birthday in Chikkaballapur district. It was reported that Kumar's friends got a cake ordered with word "KING" written on the cake and asked Anil to cut the cake. Some of his friends joined the celebrations held near his home. Kumar, a resident of Vychakurahalli village, took a sword to cut the cake and distributed it to his friends. However, after some of the videos featuring Kumar's usage of the sword went viral on social media, Gauribidanur police arrested him. He was later released but instructed to appear before the Taluk Magistrate today, police said. *—Salar News*

CID probes burning of religious book in Belagavi

BELAGAVI, 2 JUNE

A team from the CID, led by Dy SP Silaiman Tahasildar, has launched an investigation into the recent burning of a religious book in Santibasthawad village. The inquiry commenced on Monday, following the local police's inability to solve the case after a month. The team visited the prayer house, where the book was reported stolen, as well as the nearby agricultural field where the partially burnt book was discovered. The prayer house had previously lodged a complaint with the Belagavi rural police. In response to the incident, thousands from the local community staged a massive rally after Friday prayers last month. The Home Ministry has taken charge. *—Salar News*

Mysuru police crack murder of lodge manager

MYSURU, 2 JUNE

The Jayapura Police have successfully solved the murder case of Mohankumar, whose body was discovered on 18 April. Five individuals, Prajwal, Chandu, Kabir, Kalaiah, and Darshan, were arrested, while a manhunt is underway for the prime suspect, Srinivas. Mohankumar, a resident of Byadarapura in Chamarajnagar taluk and manager of a private lodge in Mysuru, was brutally killed after a dispute over a gold chain. On 17 April, Srinivas and the other five men reportedly kidnapped Mohankumar from his village, murdered him, and disposed of his body near Jayapura in Mysuru taluk. The police were able to crack the case with leads obtained from CCTV footage, which helped in the identification. *—Salar News*

AMID RISING TENSIONS

Anti-communal force to start work in 10 days

MANGALURU/ TUMAKURU, 2 JUNE

State Home Minister G Parameshwara said that the government has taken the issue communal tensions in Dakshina Kannada seriously and will deploy the anti-communal task force in ten days.

"The government has acted swiftly in response to the incident in Mangaluru. District In-charge Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao has visited the spot. I personally visited a murder site earlier," he said in Tumakuru on Monday. "Within ten days, we will operationalise a dedicated unit of anti-communal task force for three coastal districts."

Tensions have been high along the coastal belt after Hindutva activist and known rowdy-sheeter Shuhas Shetty who was murdered in Mangaluru on 1 May.

Addressing rumours that the task force would target specific communities, Parameshwara clarified that it is not communal in nature. "There is speculation that Hindu leaders are being targeted. Let me be clear—no one will be spared if they break the law, whether they are Hindu or Muslim. There will be no such incidents in Mangaluru, Udupi, or Karwar going forward," he said. *—PTI*

I am not saying this as the Home Minister, but according to a university's research, Karnataka is one of the safest states

-G Parameshwara, Home Minister

RSS LEADER BOOKED FOR HATE SPEECH

MANGALURU, 2 JUNE

An FIR was registered against an RSS leader Kalladka Prabhakar Bhat for allegedly delivering an inflammatory speech that could incite communal tension in Mangaluru, police said. Bhat delivered the speech on 12 May during a condolence meeting organised in memory of a Shuhas Shetty, they said.

Bhat addressed a gathering of around 500 people and allegedly made provocative statements that could disturb public harmony and foster enmity between communities.

Meanwhile, Hindu workers protested outside Kadaba police station on Sunday night against police visits to collect personal information from their homes.

Officers visited the residences of Hindu workers, reportedly under the directive of Superintendent of Police Arun K, prompting allegations that police took photographs and created an atmosphere of fear among families, particularly affecting women and children. *—Salar News with Agencies*

CM Siddaramaiah, Council Chairman Basavaraj Horatti, MLA Rizwan Arshad felicitated International Booker Prize winner Banu Mushtaq and translator Deepa Bhasthi at Vidhana Soudha on Monday *PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD*

Mushtaq says Kannada is the most tolerant language

BENGALURU, 2 JUNE

International Booker Prize winner Banu Mushtaq was felicitated for her by the State government at the Vidhana Soudha for her achievements on Monday.

Speaking at the event, said that Kannada is the most accommodating of all languages.

She said she is often asked by media outlets why there is intolerance towards other languages in Karnataka. "And I tell them, your understanding of Kannada is incorrect. There's no language as tolerant as Kannada. It is a language that has given a platform to many others."

Her comments come as Kamal Hassan's production team approached the Karnataka High Court against the ban against his upcoming film 'Thug Life' in the State. The controversy stems from Haasan's recent remark suggesting that Kannada originated from Tamil.

Meanwhile, Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar appealed for calm and patience amid the ongoing row.

Declining to comment on the actor's statement, he said he did not wish to escalate the issue.

"I don't know the issue so let me go to my records and then I will speak. I don't want to make this a political issue. We all are neighbours, we all have to work together, live together. Our water goes to Tamil Nadu. Tamil Nadu people come here. We are not enemies. We all are friends," he said.

Meanwhile, Karnataka Film Chamber of Commerce President M Narasimhalu said, let Haasan go to court, but no theatres in the State will screen 'Thug Life'.

"We will also talk to our legal team… Let them go to court. We have not done anything against the law," Narasimhalu said. *—PTI*

- Her comments come after a row erupted over Kamal Hassan saying Kannada originated from Tamil, triggering a ban on his latest movie

State govt expands Gruha Arogya Yojane

BENGALURU, 2 JUNE

The Karnataka government announced the statewide expansion of the "Gruha Arogya Yojane," which aims to provide screening and management for 14 non-communicable diseases (NCDs) for people aged 30 and above in rural areas. Initially piloted in Kolar district, the scheme was launched by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on 24 October 2024 and demonstrated a successful community-based approach with door-to-door screenings.

Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao stated that the extension was made possible due to enhanced programme modifications. The initial focus on six NCDs, including diabetes and hypertension, has now expanded to cover a broader spectrum, including oral, breast, and cervical cancers, along with conditions such as mental health disorders and chronic kidney disease.

Under the scheme, those diagnosed with an NCD will receive protocol medications free of charge at nearby Ayushman Arogya Mandirs (AAM).

To implement the programme ASHA workers will mobilise communities, conduct household assessments, and raise awareness, while Community Health Officers will perform screenings and manage data entry. Medical officers will provide diagnoses, treatment, and ongoing management for affected individuals. *—PTI*

SLAPPED WITH SLIPPER

Autorickshaw drivers protest against a woman who assaulted a driver, at Freedom Park in Bengaluru on Monday *PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD*

59kg gold stolen from Vijayapura Canara Bank

VIJAYAPURA, 2 JUNE

Thieves struck rich by decamping with 59kg of gold from the Mangoli branch of Canara Bank in Vijayapura district recently, a senior police officer said on Monday.

The gold was deposited by people who took loans from the bank, Vijayapura Superintendent of Police Laxman B Nimbargi told reporters here.

He said the staff locked the bank on 23 May evening. On 24 and 25 May (fourth Saturday and Sunday), the bank was closed.

On 26 May, when the peon returned to clean the branch, he noticed the shutter locks were broken.

The Canara Bank Mangoli branch manager immediately lodged a complaint, Nimbargi said.

"After inspection, it was found that the thieves had snuck into the bank and looted the gold. Bank officials have evaluated the losses and found that 59kg of gold had been stolen. The gold was deposited with the bank against gold loan," Nimbargi added.

Eight teams have been formed to investigate the case, he added.

Police suspect that the theft would have happened on the intervening night of 24 and 25 May.

"An investigation is in progress. We will soon arrest the accused and take the case to its logical end," the police officer asserted, promising strict action against the perpetrators. *—PTI*

City schools reopen amid Covid-19 tensions

BENGALURU, 2 JUNE

As schools across the State reopened on Monday after summer vacations, students in City schools were spotted wearing masks as a precautionary measure amid surge in Covid-19 cases.

Students, teachers and non-teaching staffs in many schools across the state were wearing masks and maintained distance during interactions. Even parents who accompanied students to school were seen wearing masks as they came to drop their children on the first day of school.

Covid-19 appropriate behaviour was seen being followed by students in many schools in City as they lined up at the entrance of the school maintaining distance while entering the premises.

Their body temperatures were also being checked by the staffs. *—PTI*

COTPA VIOLATIONS

Kohli's pub booked for lacking 'smoking zone'

BENGALURU, 2 JUNE

An FIR was registered against the manager and staff of One8 Commune, a pub and restaurant co-owned by cricketer Virat Kohli, for not having a designated smoking zone as per rules, police said on Monday. One8 Commune thereby allegedly violates the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA).

Following a tip-off during patrolling on 29 May, a police team inspected the One8 Commune bar and restaurant on Kasturba Road. It was that there was no designated smoking zone, they said.

Based on the complaint of a police officer, a case was registered at Cubbon Park police station against the manager and staff of One8 Commune on 31 May for violating the law under Sections 4 (prohibition of smoking in a public place) and 21 (punishment for smoking in certain places) of the COTPA, a senior police officer said.

This was part of a special drive being carried by the City police, aimed at preventing smoking-related violations.

This is not the first FIR registered against the pub. In July last year, an FIR was registered against the manager of One8 Commune and four other establishments for allegedly operating beyond permitted hours.

Similarly, the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) had also issued a notice to the restaurant in December for not obtaining an NOC from the Fire Department. *—PTI*

Thane engineer's police custody extended to 5 June

MUMBAI, 2 JUNE

A Thane court on Monday extended police custody of Ravindra Verma, 27, until 5 June. Verma, a junior engineer at a defence technology firm, was arrested by the Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) last week for allegedly spying for Pakistan. He is accused of sharing sensitive details about Indian warships and submarines after being honey-trapped by a Pakistani agent posing as a woman on Facebook. The ATS claims he sent sketches, diagrams, and audio notes, receiving payments from Indian and foreign accounts. Verma had access to the Naval Dockyard in south Mumbai. His lawyer argued the arrest was illegal, evidence lacking, and funds received were for family expenses. The ATS said further investigation and questioning of his colleagues were needed. *—PTI*

67 unexploded shells neutralised in Poonch villages

JAMMU, 2 JUNE

Over 60 unexploded shells have been safely neutralised in forward villages along Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district, a defence spokesperson said. The Army carried out controlled demolitions in Chajla, Jhulas, Mendhar, Mankot, and Lower Krishna Ghati following cross-border shelling by Pakistan from 7 to 10 May. A total of 67 shells have been defused so far, with operations ongoing. Army, in coordination with local authorities, cordoned off affected areas and temporarily relocated civilians to ensure safety. These efforts are part of a wider initiative to clear agricultural and residential zones of dangerous ordnance. Locals expressed relief, and Army reiterated its commitment to protecting border communities and preventing casualties. *—PTI*

Body found in Meghalaya may be of missing tourist

SHILLONG, 2 JUNE

Rescue teams using drones on Monday spotted a decomposed body, suspected to be of Raja Raghuvanshi of Indore, who had gone missing along with his wife on 23 May in Sohra area of Meghalaya's East Khasi Hills, police said. Another team of rescuers are on their way to the spot located on a steep gorge in Sohra to recover the body, they said. "A team of rescuers using drones stumbled upon a male body near Weisawdong falls in Sohra area. We suspect it to be of Raja Raghuvanshi," a senior police officer told PTI. Raghuvanshi and his wife Sonam had gone missing on 23 May while vacationing in Meghalaya, and efforts to locate them have been underway since then. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

Elon Musk's father likely to visit Ram Mandir

NEW DELHI, 2 JUNE

Errol Musk, father of Tesla and SpaceX CEO Elon Musk, is on a five-day visit to India after joining the global advisory board of Indian green tech firm Servotech on 5 May. His visit includes high-level meetings with policymakers, investors, and officials to discuss India's ambitions in renewable energy and EV charging infrastructure. Errol will also tour Servotech's solar and EV charger factory in Safiabad, Haryana, and attend a company event on 2 June. As part of his itinerary, he will visit the Ram Janmabhoomi temple in Ayodhya to pay respects. Servotech has planned a tree-planting drive on World Environment Day, 5 June, to promote sustainability. After India, Errol Musk will travel to South Africa. Earlier, Elon's mother, Maye Musk, visited India to launch her book and celebrated her 77th birthday in Mumbai. *—Agencies*

If it helps the party, will contest in Bihar polls: Chirag Paswan

Paswan says Nitish Kumar will continue to be CM

RAIPUR, 2 JUNE

Union Minister and Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) President Chirag Paswan on Monday said he will definitely contest the upcoming Bihar polls if his candidature consolidates his party's position and "strike rate".

He also said there is no vacancy for the post of chief minister of the eastern state as incumbent Nitish Kumar will continue to lead post the polls, likely to be held in October-November this year.

Paswan was talking to reporters at Swami Vivekananda Airport here on his arrival to attend an event of a regional news channel.

When asked about his contesting Bihar assembly elections, Paswan said, "I have already said that I don't see myself in the politics of the Centre for a longer period. The reason for my entry into politics is Bihar and Biharis (people of Bihar). I have my own vision - Bihar First, Bihari First."

Paswan said several parties benefitted when their national leaders have fought state polls.

"The BJP has tried this strategy many times by fielding their MPs in the assembly elections and have got its benefit. If my move to enter the poll fray strengthens my party and consolidates its strike rate then I will contest. We had a 100 per cent strike rate in the Lok Sabha elections. I would like my strike rate to be just as good in the Bihar polls," he said.

Asked about the chief ministerial face of the NDA for the Bihar polls, he said, "There is no vacancy for the post of Bihar CM. Nitish Kumar will be on the post after the polls."

The Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) is likely to soon call a meeting of its executive members to formalise a proposal urging Paswan to contest the Bihar assembly elections. *—PTI*

S-400 missile system
PHOTO: PTI

Russia to deliver remaining S-400 units to India

NEW DELHI, 2 JUNE

Russia has reaffirmed its commitment to deliver the remaining units of the S-400 air defence system to India by 2025-2026, as stated by Roman Babushkin, the country's Deputy Chief of Mission in India. He noted that the S-400 performed "very efficiently" during the recent tensions between India and Pakistan.

Babushkin hinted at the potential for enhanced bilateral cooperation in air defence and anti-drone systems, acknowledging the evolving security landscape.

"The air defence systems, according to what we are experiencing, the situation in Europe and here, this is one of the promising topics of our partnership in defence," he told PTI Videos.

India secured a USD 5.43 billion deal with Russia in 2018 for five squadrons of the advanced S-400 Triumf missile system, designed to counter various aerial threats from significant distances. Three squadrons have already been delivered, with the contract for the remaining two units on schedule.

Regarding future defence collaborations, Babushkin expressed openness to further discussions, particularly in light of increasing drone threats, which were highlighted during the recent India-Pakistan conflict.

On a diplomatic note, Babushkin shared that a visit by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov to India is anticipated soon, though specific dates have yet to be confirmed. *—PTI*

BSF TEAM SENT TO CONGO FOR UN PEACEKEEPING

NEW DELHI, 2 JUNE

A 160-member contingent from the Border Security Force (BSF), including 25 women, has been dispatched for a deployment with the United Nations peacekeeping mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo, a nation grappling with armed conflict and significant displacement.

BSF Director General Daljit Singh Chawdhary, along with senior officials, flagged off the team at the force's headquarters on Lodhi Road. He urged the personnel to uphold the flags of India and the BSF with pride. "Your conduct should be exemplary. You've been trained for this mission, and I am confident you will maintain our nation's honour," Chawdhary stated.

This 18th BSF contingent, led by Commandant Kailash Singh Mehta, will integrate into the United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo stationed in Beni.

The team consists of seven officers, nine subordinate officers, and 144 other personnel, including a female medical officer and 24 female constables. They have undergone an 11-week training programme covering UN peacekeeping guidelines, public order management, human rights, and civilian protection. The contingent will replace the 17th BSF team, currently stationed in Beni, which is scheduled to return on 4 June. *—PTI*

Is it so difficult to be patriotic: Khurshid

NEW DELHI/ MONROVIA / MADRID / CAIRO, 2 JUNE

Congress leader Salman Khurshid, who is a part of India's diplomatic mission abroad, on Monday said it is "distressing" that people back home are calculating political allegiances and asked if it is "so difficult to be patriotic".

Khurshid, a former external affairs minister, is part of a delegation led by JD(U) MP Sanjay Kumar Jha to convey India's message against terrorism in the wake of terror attack in Pahalgam and Operation Sindoor.

Khurshid's cryptic post comes after Congress MP Shashi Tharoor faced attacks from party leaders including Udit Raj who called him a "super spokesperson of BJP" for remarks which were perceived to favour the BJP-led NDA government at Centre.

Meanwhile, a delegation led by Shiv Sena MP Shrikant Eknath Shinde met with the Indian community in Liberia, emphasising India's "united" resolve against terrorism in all its forms.

Salman Khurshid *PHOTO: PTI*

The delegation, which visited Liberia from 31 May, participated in floral tributes at the grave of former President William VS Tubman and engaged with the diaspora to highlight their role in strengthening Indo-Liberian ties.

Simultaneously, another delegation led by DMK MP Kanimozhi Karunanidhi was in Spain, where they reiterated India's dedication to a "safer and more compassionate world."

The group interacted with an organisation representing over 4,800 victims of terrorism, sharing insights on India's experience in confronting cross-border threats.

Additionally, an all-party delegation led by NCP MP Supriya Sule arrived in Egypt to present India's stance on zero tolerance against terrorism.

Egyptian visit includes engagements with government officials and think tanks, further emphasizing India's diplomatic outreach. *—PTI*

PM to chair first Union Council meet after Op Sindoor

NEW DELHI, 2 JUNE

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will chair a meeting of Union Council of Ministers on Wednesday, the first after Pahalgam terror attack and subsequent Op Sindoor, officials said. The meeting is also being held as the Modi 3.0 government completes one year in office this month. Council of Ministers meets every three months, where implementation of key government policies is discussed threadbare in the presence of top bureaucrats. The meeting assumes significance as it is the first after dastardly Pahalgam terror attack in April and subsequent strikes carried out by armed forces. *—PTI*

Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Union Minister of Civil Aviation Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu and MoS Murlidhar Mohol during International Air Transport Association 81st Annual General Meeting, in New Delhi
PHOTO: PTI

Investment opportunity in aviation sector: Modi

NEW DELHI, 2 JUNE

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said India's fast-growing aviation sector offers an excellent investment opportunity for leading global companies.

Addressing the AGM of the International Air Transport Association (IATA) here, Modi said country aims to increase the size of the maintenance, repair and overhaul segment to USD 4 billion by 2030.

Emphasising that India has an open and supportive policy ecosystem, Modi said all efforts are being made to make the country a global manufacturing hub.India is ready for big investments in the civil aviation sector, he noted.He further said India is investing in world-class airports and that number of airports has increased to 162 from 74.

Today, India is the world's third-largest domestic aviation market. *—PTI*

Kharge's pic missing from Goa's Cong poster

PANAJI, 2 JUNE

The Goa Congress is facing backlash for not including a photograph of its national President, Mallikarjun Kharge, on a banner displayed during the Statehood Day celebrations last week. Critics say this omission has been perceived as an insult to Kharge, who is Dalit.

The Congress organised a meeting in Panaji on May 30 to commemorate Goa Statehood Day, after a scheduled public meeting in Navelim was cancelled, where Kharge was expected to attend. The banner featured images of prominent Congress figures including Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi, Goa party chief Amit Patkar, and Leader of Opposition Yuri Alemao, yet notably excluded Kharge's portrait.

The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) took to X (formerly Twitter) to share the banner, accusing the Congress of disrespecting its president. "Mallikarjun Kharge's photo deliberately left out from Congress' official Goa Statehood Day banner – a snub to the party's own national president?" the BJP post questioned.

In response to the criticism, state Congress chief Amit Patkar insisted that Kharge's picture was "erroneously" omitted from the poster. "If you check all other posters we had put up across the city, his picture is there. This is a small error. Why are you making an issue out of it? We are raising more serious issues against the BJP," Patkar stated. *—PTI*

T'GANA STATEWOOD DAY

Telangana is working to become a USD 3 trillion economy by 2047 as the country aspires to achieve USD 30 trillion by then, Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy said on Monday. Speaking at the Telangana Formation Day celebrations, Reddy said the state government hopes to contribute 10 per cent to the national GDP by 2047 *PHOTO: PTI*

YS JAGAN FLAYS TDP GOVT FOR EXCESSIVE BORROWING

AMARAVATI, 2 JUNE

- Reddy highlighted figures from CAG that show the fiscal deficit to GSDP ratio increasing from 4.08 per cent to over 5.12 per cent under current government.

YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) chief YS Jagan Mohan Reddy has accused the TDP-led government of excessive borrowing in its first year, claiming it accumulated debt equivalent to 44 per cent of the total borrowings made by the previous YSRCP administration from 2019 to 2024.

Reddy highlighted figures from the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) that show the fiscal deficit to Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) ratio increasing from 4.08 per cent to over 5.12 per cent under the current government.

He also noted a significant rise in the revenue deficit and a higher debt-to-GSDP ratio, asserting that the TDP government has nothing to show in terms of development or welfare.

He claimed that while the previous YSRCP government allocated 33.25 per cent of its borrowings for capital expenditure, the TDP allocated only 23.49 per cent, reflecting poor financial governance.

No immediate response has been made by the ruling TDP regarding these allegations. *—PTI*

HIGH-PROFILE ELECTION

Four-way contest emerges in Nilambur Assembly bypoll

MALAPPURAM , 2 JUNE

The Nilambur assembly by-election is shaping into a high-profile four-way contest after three candidates filed their nominations on Monday.

LDF candidate M Swaraj, a CPI(M) leader, submitted his nomination papers with a group of supporters.

He was accompanied by CPI(M) Politburo member A Vijayaraghavan, Minister V Abdurahiman, and other Left leaders.

Meanwhile, Trinamool Congress state coordinator P V Anvar, who announced his decision to contest the by-election, also filed his nomination following a roadshow.

Anvar, whose resignation as a Left-backed independent MLA paved the way for the by-election, filed his nomination after launching a new political front -- Janakiya Prathipaksha Prathirodha Munnani (JPPM) -- following his rejection by the Congress-led UDF.

Anvar claimed that the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) would join the alliance.

Although the AAP has not officially announced its support for Anvar, its workers gathered outside the taluk office wearing Nehru caps and waving party flags, expressing support for the Trinamool leader.

NDA candidate Adv Mohan George of the BJP also filed his papers.

He arrived at the Nilambur taluk office after a roadshow.

BJP state President Rajeev Chandrasekhar and senior leaders, including Shobha Surendran and BDJS chief Tushar Vellappally, were present.

George is a practising lawyer and a former Kerala Congress (Joseph) leader.

On 31 May, Congress-led UDF candidate Aryadan Shoukath filed his nomination papers.

The by-election is scheduled for 19 June. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

Arundhati Roy's memoir to release on 2 September

NEW DELHI, 2 JUNE

Booker Prize-winning author Arundhati Roy's memoir 'Mother Mary Comes to Me' will release on 2 September, Penguin Random House India announced on Monday. The book, available for pre-order, explores Roy's complex relationship with her late mother, women's rights activist Mary Roy, and reflects on her grief following her mother's death in September 2022. Written with emotional depth, the memoir is described as an ode to freedom and "thorny love and savage grace". Roy, 63, is known for her novels 'The God of Small Things' and 'The Ministry of Utmost Happiness', and her political essays. The memoir is priced at ₹899. Editor Manasi Subramaniam called it a story both unique and universal. —*PTI*

Army adjusts training schedule for Eid prayers in WB

KOLKATA, 2 JUNE

The Army has made adjustments to its training schedule to enable Eid ul-Adha prayers at Red Road later this week. A West Bengal government spokesperson, Minister Javed Ahmed Khan, confirmed that initial concerns regarding permission, due to the Army's prior commitments, are being resolved through discussions between event organisers and Defence authorities. In recognition of the longstanding tradition of holding Eid prayers at Red Road, the Army has agreed to modify its planned activities to accommodate the event. Red Road, a Defence property, is situated in the city centre adjacent to the Eastern Command headquarters at Fort William. This adjustment underscores the Army's commitment to supporting the community's cultural and religious practices. —*PTI*

Vehicle crashes into wedding procession, 2 dead

HAMIRPUR, 2 JUNE

A accident near Narayanpur village claimed the lives of two individuals and left five others injured after an unknown vehicle collided with a car participating in a wedding procession. The incident occurred around 2am when the vehicle struck the car en route from Kalpi to Devgaon in Sumerpur. According to police, seven people sustained serious injuries and were swiftly transported to the district hospital, where 11-year-old Shobhit and 23-year-old Saurabh Pal were pronounced dead. The bodies of the deceased have been sent for post-mortem examination, while those injured are currently receiving medical treatment, reported Sumerpur Police Station Inspector Anup Singh. —*PTI*

2.5T of explosives recovered from Maoists

BHUBANESWAR, 2 JUNE

Security forces have successfully recovered over 2.5 tonnes of explosive materials looted by Maoists during a coordinated operation on the Odisha-Jharkhand border. The joint effort involved personnel from the Special Operation Group (SOG), CRPF, Jharkhand's elite Jaguar force, and Sundergarh's District Voluntary Force (DVF), who uncovered the explosives in the K Balang area of Sundergarh district. The explosives, primarily gelatin sticks, were taken on 27 May after armed Maoists hijacked a truck transporting them to a stone quarry. Following the incident, which included a fierce gun battle, initial explosives were recovered but further searches continued through 28 May. The hoarded materials were discovered buried under rocks and soil in the Saranda forest region. —*PTI*

Only one accused in Anna University case: Prosecutor

Accused pleaded for leniency as he is the family's breadwinner

CHENNAI, 2 JUNE

Gnanasekaran, convicted in the Anna University sexual assault case, being escorted by the police in Chennai on Monday *PHOTO: PTI*

Public Prosecutor Mary Jeyanthi on Sunday confirmed that Gnanasekaran is the sole accused in the high-profile Anna University sexual assault case, dismissing allegations that others were shielded. She emphasised that documentary and forensic evidence conclusively proved his guilt, and no other individuals were implicated.

Speaking after the verdict, the prosecutor said 11 charges were filed and all were successfully proved. The prosecution demonstrated that Gnanasekaran had impersonated a university staffer to trap the victim, recorded the assault, and used the video for blackmail.

Gnanasekaran, who sought leniency by claiming to be his family's sole breadwinner, was opposed by the prosecution, which urged the court to impose maximum punishment. The Mahila Court convicted him under various sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), Information Technology Act, and the Tamil Nadu Prevention of Women Harassment Act.

The case, which surfaced after the victim lodged a complaint at the All Women Police Station in Kotturpuram on 23 December 2024, sparked public outrage. She alleged that Gnanasekaran threatened her while she was with a male friend and later sexually harassed her.

Political controversy soon followed due to Gnanasekaran's alleged links with the ruling DMK. While opposition parties accused the DMK of protecting him, Chief Minister M.K. Stalin clarified in January that Gnanasekaran was only a sympathiser, not a party member.

The FIR, leaked and broadcast by sections of the media, led to further uproar. The Madras High Court later transferred the case to a Special Investigation Team (SIT), which also probed the FIR leak and filed a chargesheet in February.

The case was subsequently moved to the Mahila Court, where charges were formally framed. —*PTI*

Commuters on a waterlogged road after heavy rainfall in Assam's Guwahati on Monday *PHOTO: PTI*

Floods wreck Northeast states

GUWAHATI/IMPHAL/AIZAWL/GANGTOK, 2 JUNE

The flood crisis across Northeast India remains critical as heavy rains continue to batter Assam, Manipur, Mizoram, and Sikkim, leading to widespread devastation.

In Assam, over 4 lakh people across 15 districts are affected. Cachar remains worst-hit with over 1 lakh impacted. Ten people have died due to floods and landslides so far. The Brahmaputra and several tributaries are flowing above danger levels. Relief camps house over 10,000 displaced individuals while roads, bridges and embankments have suffered heavy damage. The IMD forecasts more heavy rain across the state.

Manipur has seen floods in Imphal East, Heingang, and Senapati, affecting nearly 20,000 people and damaging over 3,300 houses. Waterlogging has disrupted hospitals and offices, including the state-run JNIMS. Governor Ajay Kumar Bhalla and armed forces are overseeing relief operations, with around 800 people rescued. Schools in affected regions remain shut.

In Mizoram, incessant rain has caused 211 landslides and damaged over 60 houses. Schools across all 11 districts remain closed. Five deaths have been reported, including three Myanmarese refugees. Power and water supply are disrupted in several areas. Chief Minister Lalduhoma has announced emergency measures, including the release of disaster relief funds.

Sikkim is reeling from landslides. Over 1,700 stranded tourists have been evacuated from Lachung to Phidang, with operations continuing. Authorities warn of further disruptions due to landslides and road blockages. —*PTI*

> **Modi govt must release more funds to all the states of NE, especially Assam for flood preparedness. Perhaps Modi ji could open the floodgates of PM CARES Fund, crores of which lie, without a public audit**
>
> -Mallikarjun Kharge, Congress President

KERALA LOST POWER INFRA WORTH ₹164 CR

T'PURAM, 2 JUNE

Heavy monsoon rains and strong winds that swept across Kerala last week have caused widespread damage to the state's power infrastructure.

The loss to the power distribution sector stands at Rs 164.46 crore.

The Kerala State Electricity Board (KSEB) reported that 3,153 high-tension poles and 23,339 low-tension poles were damaged, along with 2,826 high-tension lines and 61,637 low-tension lines.

This led to power outages for 81.99 lakh consumers.

Electricity has been restored to more than 76.35 lakh. —*PTI*

With 4 Covid deaths, active cases near 4,000 in India

NEW DELHI, 2 JUNE

Delhi reported 47 new cases, bringing its total case count to 483 *PHOTO: PTI*

India's active Covid-19 cases rose to 3,961 as of 8 am on Monday, according to data released by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. The country recorded 203 new cases since Sunday, while the cumulative Covid-19 death toll for 2025 increased to 32, with four more fatalities reported in the past 24 hours.

Delhi, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, and Kerala each reported one death. The Delhi fatality was a 22-year-old woman with a pre-existing lung condition, while Tamil Nadu reported the death of a 25-year-old man with bronchial complications. Maharashtra confirmed the death of a 44-year-old man, and details of the Kerala fatality are awaited.

Delhi reported 47 new cases, bringing its total active case count to 483. Kerala, which continues to report the highest number of active cases, recorded 35 new infections, pushing its total to 1,435. Maharashtra added 21 new cases, with active cases reaching 506, while West Bengal reported 44 new cases, increasing its active caseload to 331.

On Friday, Union Minister of State for Health and AYUSH (Independent Charge), Prataprao Jadhav, said the Centre is fully prepared to handle any potential Covid-19 surge. He assured that infrastructure built during earlier waves—such as oxygen plants and ICU beds—has been reviewed and readied. Government sources confirmed that the severity of infections remains low, with most patients recovering in home isolation. Authorities are closely monitoring the situation, but currently, there is no cause for concern, officials said. —*ANI*

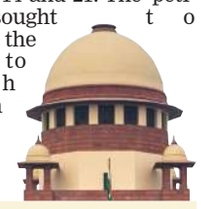
SC DISMISSES PLEA AGAINST ASSAM DEPORTATIONS

NEW DELHI, 2 JUNE

The Supreme Court on Monday refused to entertain a plea alleging that the Assam government was conducting arbitrary detentions and deportations of suspected foreigners without proper nationality verification or legal safeguards.

A bench of Justices Sanjay Karol and Satish Chandra Sharma directed the petitioner, the All BTC Minority Students Union, represented by senior advocate Sanjay Hegde, to move the Gauhati High Court instead.

The petition, filed by advocate Adeel Ahmed, claimed Assam launched the campaign after a Supreme Court order on 4 February directing the deportation of 63 identified foreigners. It cited cases of wrongful deportations, including a retired teacher, and argued violations of Articles 14 and 21. The petitioner has sought to withdraw the plea to approach the High Court. —*PTI*



Denied basic amenities: Jailed influencer

Social media influencer Sharmishtha Panoli being produced at a court in Kolkata *PHOTO: PTI*

KOLKATA, 2 JUNE

The lawyer of Sharmistha Panoli, the 22-year-old Instagram influencer arrested for allegedly uploading a video with communal remarks, filed a petition in the Alipore Court on Monday alleging denial of basic amenities in custody.

Her counsel, Mohammed Samimuddin, claimed Panoli is being held in unsanitary conditions at the Alipore Women's Correctional Home and is suffering from kidney-related issues. The court has sought a report on the matter by 4 June.

Panoli was arrested by Kolkata Police on Friday night from Gurugram, Haryana, based on a complaint filed on 15 May at Garden Reach Police Station. She was accused of uploading a video that allegedly promoted communal disharmony and insulted the religious sentiments of a section of society.

Kolkata Police have defended the arrest, stating all legal procedures were followed. Police said repeated attempts were made to serve a notice under Section 35 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), but Panoli was found absconding. A court-issued warrant led to her lawful arrest.

Police dismissed claims that the arrest was linked to criticism of Pakistan, asserting instead that the content constituted hate speech, which cannot be protected under Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution.

Panoli has been booked under relevant sections of the Bhartiya Nyaya Sanhita and remains in judicial custody until 13 June. —*PTI*

25 rare Husain paintings up for auction after HC nod

MUMBAI, 2 JUNE

Twenty-five rare paintings by the late Indian modernist artist MF Husain will be auctioned on 12 June, following an order from the Bombay High Court. The paintings, part of Husain's OPCE - Our Planet Called Earth series, were secured by the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd (NAFED) in connection with a loan default case.

MF Husain *PHOTO: PTI*

In a February ruling, Justice RI Chagla authorised the Sheriff of Mumbai to proceed with the auction as part of a dispute involving a loan default of Rs 236 crore by industrialist Guru Swarup Srivastava's Swarup Group of Industries. Srivastava gained notoriety in 2007 for commissioning 100 paintings from Husain at Rs 1 crore each.

Last May, art expert Dadiba Pundole submitted a valuation report to the court, estimating the paintings' worth at Rs 25 crore. Following the court's directives, an auction notice was issued, facilitating the forthcoming sale at the Hamilton House in south Mumbai. After the auction concludes, the Sheriff of Mumbai is required to report back to the High Court by 3 July for final instructions on the transfer of the artworks. The case against Srivastava and the Swarup Group began in 2006 amid allegations of the misappropriation of Rs 150 crore from loans obtained from NAFED. —*PTI*

Ch'garh village declared Maoist-free as 16 surrender

SUKMA, 2 JUNE

PHOTO: X

In a significant development, sixteen Naxalites, including six with a combined reward of Rs 25 lakh, surrendered in Sukma district, Chhattisgarh, on Monday, according to police reports. Among the surrendering group, nine were from Kerlapenda village panchayat, now officially declared Naxal-free.

Their decision to surrender was influenced by disillusionment with the "hollow" and "inhuman" Maoist ideology, alongside atrocities committed by their comrades against local tribal communities, noted Sukma Superintendent of Police, Kiran Chavan. The cadres expressed their support for the state government's 'Niyad Nellanar' (your good village) initiative, aimed at enhancing development in remote areas, as well as the new surrender and rehabilitation policy. Among those who surrendered were Rita alias Dodi Sukki, 36, a member of the central regional committee, and Rahul Punem, 18, both carrying rewards of Rs 8 lakh each. Additionally, Lekam Lakhma, 28, had a bounty of Rs 3 lakh, while three others were valued at Rs 2 lakh each. With the surrender, Kerlapenda qualifies for a Rs 1 crore development project under the Elvad Panchayat Yojna. —*PTI*

54,378 QUALIFY

Delhi's Rajit tops JEE; Majhi tops among girls

NEW DELHI, 2 JUNE

Delhi zone's Rajit Gupta bagged the top rank in IIT entrance JEE advanced, results of which were announced on Monday.

According to officials at IIT Kanpur, which was the conducting institute this time for Joint Entrance Exam (JEE)-Advanced, a total of 1,80,422 candidates appeared in both papers 1 and 2 of the exam held on 18 May.

"In the exam, 54,378 candidates have qualified, out of which 9,404 are female candidates," an official said.

Kota resident Rajit Gupta, who scored 332 out of 360 marks, is the top ranker in the Common Rank List (CRL).

Devdutta Majhi of IIT Kharagpur zone is the top-ranked female candidate with CRL 16. She obtained 312 marks.

Rajit Gupta and Devdutta Majhi

PHOTO: IIT

JEE-Main, which is the admission test for engineering colleges across the country, is the qualifying exam for JEE-Advanced.

At total of 116 foreign candidates also appeared for the exam, 13 of whom have qualified.

Out of the top 100 candidates, 31 each are from Bombay and Delhi zone while 23 are from the IIT Hyderabad zone.

- According to officials at IIT Kanpur, which was the conducting institute this time for JEE-Advanced, a total of 1,80,422 candidates appeared in both papers 1 and 2.

Kanpur zone has are four candidates in the top 100, Kharagpur five and Roorkee six.

Explaining the criteria for inclusion in the rank list, the official said, aggregate mark is the sum of the marks scored in Mathematics, Physics, and Chemistry.

"Candidates have to satisfy the subject-wise as well as the aggregate qualifying marks to be included in a rank list," the official added. —*PTI*

DESTINATION GAZA

Climate campaigner Greta Thunberg and 11 activists set sail to Gaza on a ship operated by activist group Freedom Flotilla Coalition on Sunday afternoon. The ship departed from the Sicilian port of Catania, in southern Italy. Thunberg, along with the other activists aimed at 'breaking Israel's siege' of devastated territory
PHOTO: SCREENGRAB

Here's a recap of IPL's highs & lows this season

IPL's costliest-ever player Rishabh Pant at last delivered the goods with a ton in the final match but Lucknow Super Giants missed the bus. Axar Patel's Delhi Capitals nosedived from cruise control. Former winners Chennai Super Kings, Rajasthan Royals and Kolkata Knight Riders cut a sorry figure while Sunrisers Hyderabad misfired all the way through.

In all, it took 67 days including a 10-day break, for the IPL to go through its preliminary round of 70 matches this year which witnessed some surreal highs and disappointing lows.

Here's a recap so far before the playoffs begin:

Young guns make a strong dent:
RR's Vaibhav Suryavanshi was a 13-year-old when he was picked in the mega auction last December and at 14 in May, he became the youngest ever to score the fastest IPL ton for an Indian off 35 balls and second fastest ever, against Gujarat Titans.

His finesse in stroke play and spunk at the biggest stage captivated the game's greats.

While India T20I opener Abhishek Sharma was also among those who hit centuries, it also included Punjab Kings' uncapped Priyansh Arya, who took apart a lowly CSK with his maiden IPL ton. Prabhsimran Singh also showed he has got the goods while Ayush Mhatre gave CSK some reasons to smile.

Daunting SRH misfire:
Last year's runner-up SRH came in with one of the most intimidating batting line-ups but the all-out attack approach fell flat on its face.

SRH began the IPL with the second highest total ever of 286/6 against RR and ended with the third highest, of 278/3 against KKR.

In between, it looked like SRH never had a Plan B with the bat, Nitish Kumar Reddy largely disappointed and not having a quality spinner to bowl in the powerplay hurt them.

CSK learn their lessons the hard way:
Change is the only constant goes the old adage and CSK learnt it the hard way this year. The side was forced to part with its philosophy of keeping young talent on the bench and rely only on seasoned players such as MS Dhoni.

At the top, the 17-year-old Mumbai batter Mhatre thrived against the odds while Proteas' Dewald Brevis dazzled towards the end. The 20-year-old Afghan Noor Ahmad emerged as CSK's most successful spinner with R Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja being the other options

Sai Sudharsan comes of age:
The young Southpaw showed that a no-risk approach with relentless attack at every opportunity can be a way to amass runs. he tops the charts right now with more than 670 runs and was deservingly rewarded with a national call-up for the Test tour of England.

From being retired out for batting slowly in 2023 to being one of the best batters in 2025, Gujarat Titans' Sudharsan proved his time has come.

Mumbai Indians do a Mumbai Indians:
Four defeats in first five games marked yet another typical Mumbai Indians' start to an IPL, but Hardik Pandya's men came back roaring to win next six matches to establish themselves among the front-runners.

Rohit Sharma and Tilak Varma have blown hot and cold but Suryakumar Yadav showed why he is among the best in the business with remarkable consistency, while Jasprit Bumrah's 17 wickets in 10 matches must set alarm bells ringing in opposition camps.

RR's forgettable season:
From sweating on Sanju Samson's fitness and form to lack of gumption shown by others, RR endured a forgettable season to finish second last ahead of CSK.

Parting ways with key players including Jos Buttler, Ashwin, Yuzvendra Chahal and Trent Boult disturbed their balance more than perhaps RR imagined.

High-flying DC nosedive:
The Capitals began this IPL looking like they won't put a foot wrong but when it came to being clinical and consistent, the fight petered out.

DC began with five wins in first six matches and were perched at the top of the table, but a stunning nosedive saw them lose five out of the next eight.

KKR misfire but Rahane stands tall:
Rahane waged a lone battle of sorts but the season was also poor for the franchise's costliest player and vice-captain Venkatesh Iyer. With five defeats in first eight matches, it was all but over quite early for the defending champions who failed to play like one.

Marsh, Pooran stand tall in LSG rabble:
Five wins in first eight games built largely on the top-order's success gave LSG a chance to finish in the final four but there were more areas of concerns than bright spots.

Pant's horror run with the bat, lack of depth in middle order and lack of variation in bowling saw them miss out on playoffs again but Mitchell Marsh, Nicholas Pooran and Aiden Markram gave them the substance amid Digvesh Rathi's theatrics.

Punjab Kings' rise:
Skipper Shreyas Iyer's performances in last one year or so have been screaming out loud that there is more to him than what is perceived and it was no surprise to see that he was the anchor of the perennial strugglers' remarkable turnaround. With a determined Iyer and hard-nosed head coach in Australian Ricky Ponting at the helm, there was little doubt that PBKS would be one of the teams to beat and performances like the one against KKR, to defend lowest-ever total (111), was only an example.

Gill's Titans take flight:
He has scored at least 400 runs every season since he joined Gujarat Titans three years ago but Gill not only continued to lead by example, but ensured his side remained ahead of the race despite a lop-sided batting and lack of form of one of their premier bowlers in Rashid Khan. *—PTI*

SALAR ساہر

JEE toppers share how to crack IIT exams

Analysing mock papers, focussing on NCERT textbooks, and taking timely breaks helped them crack the JEE-Advanced exam, say Rajit Gupta and Sakshyam Jindal, number one and two on the merit list of the competitive exam that ranks among the toughest in the country.

Both Gupta and Jindal are from the same coaching centre in Kota.

In an interview with PTI, they shared their insights and strategies to crack the IIT entrance exam JEE-Advanced, the results of which were announced Monday morning.

"It is a moment of joy as this was achieved due to my hard work," said Gupta, the all-India topper.

Gupta, who is from coaching hub Kota, said he began his preparation when he was in Class 10.

"There was nothing special in my preparation. My key goal was to complete assigned tasks and solve modules on time," said Gupta, who scored the highest 322 out of 360 on the test.

He said he also solved selective questions from HC Verma and Irodov (books) but mainly focused on the NCERT textbook, he said.

His father Deepak Gupta, an engineer working in BSNL in Kota, said he had

Analysing mock papers, focussing on NCERT textbooks, and taking timely breaks helped them crack the JEE-Advanced exam, say Rajit Gupta and Sakshyam Jindal, number one and two on the merit list of the competitive exam that ranks among the toughest in the country.

"piles of books" that went way above his head and "attempted a heap" of mock papers. He, too, once attended a coaching institute in the city.

Rashmi Gupta, his mother, is an assistant professor in home science at JDB College in Kota.

Gupta added, "I didn't adhere to a specific number of hours. It entirely depended on completing an entire topic. I generally devote most of the time to studying."

He said he would take breaks when he got stuck on solving a question. "I would speak to my younger sister which would change my mood and would then go back to studying."

He said he never allowed nervousness to overwhelm him.

Group study with friends and the mutual support they had for each other also helped his preparation, he said.

Sakshyam Jindal from Hisar in Haryana, who stood second in the Common Rank List (CRL), said he was based in Kota for the last two years to prepare for the entrance test.

Both Jindal and Gupta attended the Allen Career Institute for their preparations, with the latter attending the centre when he was in Class 6.

Jindal said there was never any issue of strategising for the exam as his teachers would give him a plan which he would just follow.

He said since he felt confident about Maths, he focussed more on Physics and Chemistry.

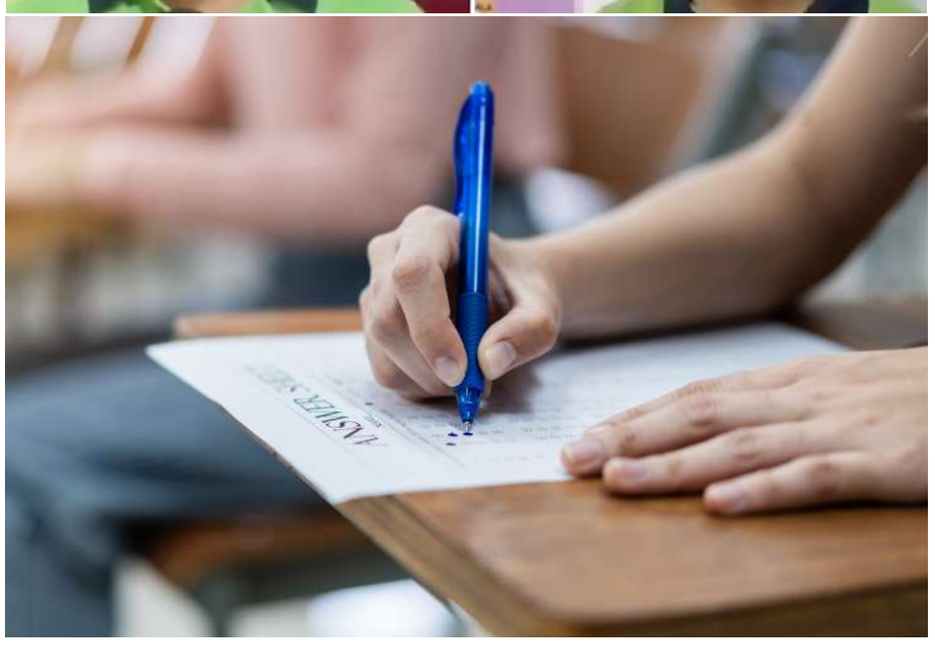
"Regular analysis of your mock test will improve your concept. It will help you overcome panic during the examination," he said.

When asked about his future goals, Jindal said, "Primarily, my goal is to join IIT Bombay."

"At present, I don't have any plans regarding going abroad for better opportunities," he added.

Jindal said he has played under-14 state cricket for his district. Dancing and playing the piano are his hobbies, he said.

His parents Umesh and Anita Jindal are pathologists. *—PTI*



Rajit Gupta and Sakshyam Jindal ***PHOTO: PTI***

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

Evolution shows smartphones as a form of electronic parasites

Head lice, fleas and tapeworms have been humanity's companions throughout our evolutionary history. Yet, the greatest parasite of the modern age is no blood-sucking invertebrate. It is sleek, glass-fronted and addictive by design. Its host? Every human on Earth with a wifi signal.

Far from being benign tools, smartphones parasitise our time, our attention and our personal information, all in the interests of technology companies and their advertisers.

In a new article in the Australasian Journal of Philosophy, we argue smartphones pose unique societal risks, which come into sharp focus when viewed through the lens of parasitism.

Evolutionary biologists define a parasite as a species that benefits from a close relationship with another species – its host – while the host bears a cost.

Smartphones have radically changed our lives. From navigating cities to managing chronic health diseases such as diabetes, these pocket-sized bits of tech make our lives easier. So much so that most of us are rarely without them.

Yet, despite their benefits, many of us are hostage to our phones and slaves to the endless scroll, unable to fully disconnect. Phone users are paying the price with a lack of sleep, weaker offline relationships and mood disorders.

Not all close species relationships are parasitic. Many organisms that live on or inside us are beneficial.

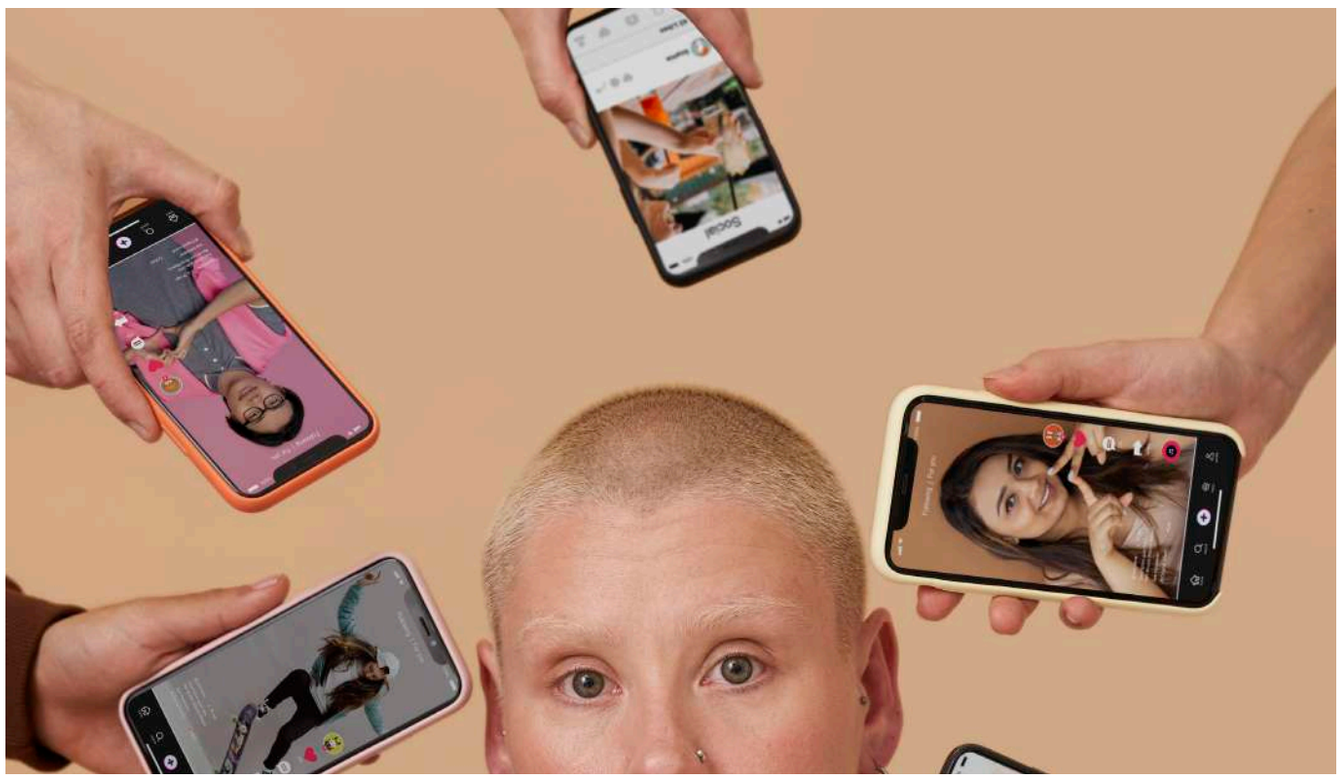
Consider the bacteria in the digestive tracts of animals. They can only survive and reproduce in the gut of their host species, feeding on nutrients passing through. But they provide benefits to the host, including improved immunity and better digestion. These win-win associations are called mutualisms.

The human-smartphone association began as a mutualism. The technology proved useful to humans for staying in touch, navigating via maps and finding useful information.

Philosophers have spoken of this not in terms of mutualism, but rather as phones being an extension of the human mind, like notebooks, maps and other tools.

From these benign origins, however, we argue the relationship has become parasitic. Such a change is not uncommon in nature; a mutualist can evolve to become a parasite, or vice versa.

As smartphones have become near-indispensible, some of the most popular apps they offer have come to serve the interests of the app-making companies and their advertisers more faithfully than those of their human users.



Smartphones have radically changed our lives ***PHOTO: FREEPIK***

While this realisation is interesting in and of itself, the benefit of viewing smartphones through the evolutionary lens of parasitism comes into its own when considering where the relationship might head next – and how we could thwart these high-tech parasites.

On the Great Barrier Reef, bluestreak cleaner wrasse establish "cleaning stations" where larger fish allow the wrasse to feed on dead skin, loose scales and invertebrate parasites living in their gills. This relationship is a classic mutualism – the larger fish lose costly parasites and the cleaner wrasse get fed.

Sometimes the cleaner wrasse "cheat" and nip their hosts, tipping the scale from mutualism to parasitism. The fish being cleaned may punish offenders by chasing them away or withholding further visits. In this, the reef fish exhibit something evolutionary biologists see as important to keeping mutualisms in balance: policing.

Evolution shows that two things are key: an ability to detect exploitation when it occurs, and the capacity to respond.

In the case of the smartphone, we can't easily detect the exploitation. Tech companies that design the various features and algorithms to keep you picking up your phone aren't advertising this behaviour.

Many of us have become reliant on smartphones for everyday tasks. Rather than remembering facts, we offload task to digital devices – for some people, this can change their cognition and memory. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

Nigeria flood toll reaches 200; rescue ops cease

ABUJA, 1 JUNE

The death toll from severe flooding in Mokwa, a market town in Nigeria's Niger State, has now reached at least 200, according to officials. On Thursday, torrential rain caused rapid flooding, affecting this key trading hub located around 380km west of Abuja. The deputy chairman, Musa Kimboku, said rescue operations had ceased as authorities no longer expected to find survivors. Over 3,000 residents have been displaced, with bodies being exhumed to prevent disease outbreaks. The flood, which rose quickly, left homes submerged and knocked out essential infrastructure. President Bola Tinubu ordered emergency measures to support victims. Despite flooding being common during Nigeria's wet season, this was particularly devastating. *—PTI*

Three killed, seven missing in Tibet landslides

BEIJING, 2 JUNE

Three people have died, and seven others are missing following a landslide in Muta township, Qamdo city, Tibet, reported officials on Monday. The incident occurred on Sunday night, displacing approximately 200,000 cubic metres of mud and rock. Two individuals sustained injuries but are in stable condition at a local hospital. Around 500 personnel, including rescuers, medical staff, and firefighters, are actively engaged in the search and rescue operation, aided by ambulances, excavators, and other essential resources. The Qamdo city government has allocated five million yuan for emergency relief. The Ministry of Emergency Management has activated a Level-IV emergency response and dispatched a team to assist local rescue efforts. *—PTI*

Fire at Mexican rehabilitation centre kills 12

MEXICO CITY, 1 JUNE

A devastating fire at a drug rehabilitation centre in San Jose Iturbe, Mexico, killed 12 individuals and left at least three others injured. The incident occurred early on Sunday, and local authorities are currently investigating the cause of the blaze. The municipal government said, "We express our solidarity with the families of those who have been killed while they tried to overcome addictions." They also announced plans to assist with funeral expenses. Reports from Mexican media indicate that the victims were locked inside the facility at the time of the fire. This event follows a similar incident in February, where five died in a fire at a rehabilitation centre in Mexico City. *—PTI*

Damascus stock exchange reopens after six months

DAMASCUS, 2 JUNE

Trading has resumed on the Damascus Securities Exchange after a six-month hiatus, marking a significant step towards revitalising Syria's economy following nearly 14 years of civil conflict. The exchange had been closed during the upheaval preceding the fall of former president Bashar Assad amidst a rapid rebel offensive. Syrian Finance Minister Mohammed Yisr Barnieh attended the reopening, emphasising the event as a sign of economic recovery and stating that the exchange will operate as a private entity aimed at fostering economic development, particularly in the digital sector. This reopening coincides with a gradual easing of international financial restrictions on Syria. Additionally, Syria recently signed a $7 billion power deal with a consortium of Qatari, Turkish, and US firms. *—PTI*

UKRAINE-RUSSIA PEACE TALKS END IN ONE HOUR

Documents traded, preparations made for PoW release

ISTANBUL, 2 JUNE

Delegations from Russia and Ukraine ended their latest peace talks Monday in Turkey after just over an hour, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and Russian state media said.

Speaking in Vilnius, Lithuania, Zelenskyy said both sides "exchanged documents through the Turkish side, and we are preparing a new release of prisoners of the war". Ukraine also handed Russia an official list of children it says were forcibly deported and must be returned, said Andriy Yermak, head of Zelenskyy's office.

Expectations were low for any breakthrough on ending the 3-year-old war after a string of stunning attacks over the weekend.

The previous direct talks on 16 May also led to a swap of prisoners, with 1,000 on both sides being exchanged.

Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan had chaired the peace talks at Istanbul's Ciragan Palace, a residence dating from the Ottoman Empire. The talks aimed to discuss both sides' ceasefire terms, he said, adding that "the whole world's eyes are focused on the contacts and discussions you will have here".

However, recent comments by senior officials in both countries indicate they remain far apart on the key conditions for stopping the war.

The Ukrainian delegation was led by Defence Minister Rustem Umerov, while Vladimir Medinsky, an aide to Russian President Vladimir Putin, headed the Kremlin team.

The Russian and Ukrainian delegations, each numbering more than a dozen people, sat at a U-shaped table across from each other with Turkish officials between them. Many of the Ukrainians wore military fatigues.

Meanwhile, the Institute for the Study of War, a Washington-based think tank, said on Sunday that "Russia is attempting to delay negotiations and prolong the war in order to make additional battlefield gains". *—PTI*

Members of the Ukrainian delegation arrive at Ciragan Palace, a residence dating from the Ottoman Empire, in Turkey on Monday **PHOTO: PTI**

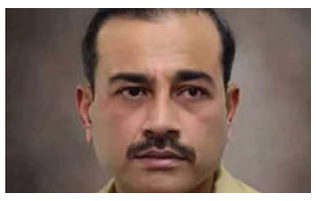
Ukrainian Army chief quits over Russian strike killing 12

Major General Mykhailo Drapatyi, commander of Ukraine's land forces, tendered his resignation on Sunday, taking responsibility for a lethal Russian missile strike on a Ukrainian military training facility that resulted in the deaths of 12 soldiers and injuries to 60 others, according to a Reuters report.

Drapatyi, who has led Ukraine's wartime land army since November last year, expressed deep sorrow over the tragedy at the 239th training ground. Writing on Facebook, he said, "These are young guys from a training battalion. Most of them were in shelters. They were supposed to study, live, fight - not die." *—ANI*

'Pak Army earns billions in smuggling, and land-grabs'

PARIS, 2 JUNE



Asim Munir **PHOTO: ANI**

The Pakistani Army has reportedly constructed a billion-dollar economic empire built on unregulated businesses, corruption, and illicit trade with Balochistan.

Taha Siddiqui, a Pakistani journalist living in exile in France, said the Army maintains vast commercial interests across real estate, consumer goods, and agriculture. Siddiqui claimed the military's business ventures are prioritised in the allocation of government contracts, functioning with little oversight or accountability.

Qambar Baloch, General Secretary of the Baloch Advocacy and Studies Centre (BASC), said that Balochistan has long served as a profitable zone for Pakistan's military elite. He alleged that the Army has built an illicit, unregulated economy in the province, driven by border smuggling, drug trafficking, and the misappropriation of public funds.

He highlighted the 900-kilometre-long Goldsmid Line -- the border between Pakistan and Iran -- as a major corridor in an extensive fuel smuggling operation. "Each day, around 6 to 8 million litres of Iranian petroleum enter Pakistan-controlled Balochistan. Approximately 40 percent of the vehicles involved reportedly belong to the Pakistan Army, its informers, or pro-army death squads".

He claimed Army-affiliated transporters net the military nearly $1 million per day.

Baloch also accused the Pakistan Maritime Security Agency and the Pakistan Coast Guard of facilitating illegal trawling by Chinese and Karachi-based fishing vessels. "This practice is rapidly depleting marine resources in Balochistan's coastal waters and is devastating the livelihoods of local fishermen".

The Army has also reportedly acquired prime coastal land in Gwadar and is aggressively promoting investment by overseas Pakistanis and foreign entities, further marginalising locals. *—ANI*

> **The Army-run Frontier Works Organisation has monopolised highway construction contracts and entered mineral exploration through a partnership with Pakistan Petroleum Limited. Their operations target copper and gold deposits in Eastern Chagai, covering 239 square kilometres**
>
> —Qambar Baloch, General Secretary of the Baloch Advocacy and Studies Centre

Hasina's Awami League rejects 'kangaroo court trial'

DHAKA, 2 JUNE

Anti-national and anti-independence forces staged a mock trial against former Bangladeshi prime minister Sheikh Hasina in a kangaroo court, Awami League said in a statement.

Formal charges were filed on Sunday against Hasina for crimes against humanity committed during the student-led uprising in July-August 2024. The charges state Hasina was the mastermind behind the inhumane acts such as crimes against humanity, murders, and burning of bodies across the country during the movement to overthrow the government in 2024.

Sheikh Hasina's Bangladesh Awami League, one of the largest political parties in Bangladesh, rejected the trial, calling it a mockery. Bangladesh interim government led by Muhammad Yunus earlier banned the activities of Awami League and its affiliated organisations to conduct the trial smoothly.

"(It is) a black day in the history of Bangladesh, because anti-national and anti-liberation forces have staged a farcical trial in the kangaroo court formed to implement their political objectives," Obaidul Quader, General Secretary of Bangladesh Awami League said in a statement on the party's Facebook page. "The people of Bangladesh do not accept their fabricated farce.

"The illegal fascist Yunus government did not conduct a proper investigation into the incidents of casualties," he said. "Moving forward with the trial process without a proper investigation is tantamount to fulfilling one's own political vendetta". *—PTI*

US: 8 hurt by flamethrowing man to 'free Palestine'

The man allegedly disrupted a group raising campaigning for the release of Israeli hostages **PHOTO: PTI**

BOULDER, 2 JUNE

A man with a makeshift flamethrower yelled "Free Palestine" and threw an incendiary device into a group that had assembled to raise attention for Israeli hostages in Gaza, law enforcement officials said Sunday in Colorado, US. Eight people were injured, some with burns.

The suspect, Mohamed Sabry Soliman, 45, is expected to face charges in connection with what the FBI is investigating as a terrorist act.

The attack occurred as people with a volunteer group called Run For Their Lives was concluding their weekly demonstration to raise visibility for the hostages who remain in Gaza. Video from the scene shows a witness shouting, "He's right there. He's throwing Molotov cocktails," as a police officer with his gun drawn advances on a bare-chested suspect who is holding containers in each hand.

The six victims who were wounded ranged in age from 67 to 88, and the injuries spanned from serious to minor, officials said.

The incident occurred barely a week after a man who also allegedly yelled "Free Palestine" was charged with fatally shooting two Israeli embassy staffers outside of a Jewish museum in Washington.

"Sadly, attacks like this are becoming too common across the country," said Mark Michalek, the special agent in charge of the FBI's Denver field office.

"This is an example of how perpetrators of violence continue to threaten communities across the nation," he added. *—PTI*

Mohammad Sabri Suleima, who the FBI is investigating as a terrorist **PHOTO: X**

BACKED BY TRUMP

Conservative Karol Nawrocki becomes Poland's President

WARSAW, 2 JUNE

Conservative Karol Nawrocki won Poland's weekend Presidential runoff election, according to the final vote count on Monday.

Nawrocki won 50.89 per cent of votes in a very tight race against liberal Warsaw Mayor Rafal Trzaskowski, who received 49.11 per cent. Nawrocki will succeed Andrzej Duda, a conservative whose second and final term ends on 6 August.

The close race had the country on edge since the first round two weeks earlier and through the night into Monday, revealing deep divisions in the country along the eastern flank of NATO and the European Union.

An early exit poll released Sunday evening suggested Trzaskowski was headed to victory before the updated polling reversed the picture.

The outcome indicates that Poland will take a more nationalist path under its new leader, who was backed by US President Donald Trump.

Most day-to-day powers in the Polish political system rests with a Prime Minister appointed by the Parliament. However, the President's role is not merely ceremonial.

The office holds the power to influence foreign policy and to veto legislation.

Prime Minister Donald Tusk came to power in late 2023 at the end of a coalition government that spans a broad ideological divide.

In fact, Tusk's electoral promises, such as loosening the restrictive abortion law remain largely incomplete.

But Duda's veto power has been another obstacle. It has prevented Tusk from fulfilling promises to reverse laws that politicised the court system in a way that the European Union declared to be undemocratic.

Nawrocki, a 42-year-old historian, was tapped by the Law and Justice party as part of its push for a fresh start. He led efforts to topple monuments to the Soviet Red Army in Poland, and Russia responded by putting him on a wanted list, according to Polish media.

Nawrocki's supporters describe him as the embodiment of traditional, patriotic values.

Those who oppose secular trends, including LGBTQ+ visibility, have embraced him, viewing him as a reflection of the traditional values they grew up with. *—PTI*

Karol Nawrocki, a Trump-backed conservative historian and former boxer won the Polish Election with 50.9% of the vote **PHOTO: X**

Scores evacuated in Canada amid wildfires

FLIN FLON, 1 JUNE

More than 25,000 residents across three provinces have been evacuated amidst numerous active wildfires, which have also severely impacted air quality in parts of Canada and the US, officials report.

The majority of the evacuees hail from Manitoba, where a state of emergency was declared last week. As of Saturday, around 17,000 people had been relocated, alongside 1,300 in Alberta and 8,000 in Saskatchewan, with further evacuations anticipated.

Saskatchewan's Public Safety Agency warned of fluctuating air quality and visibility due to increasing smoke levels. Premier Scott Moe highlighted that ongoing hot, dry weather is exacerbating the situation, warning that the upcoming week is crucial for fire containment.

In Manitoba, over 5,000 evacuees come from Flin Flon, located 645 km (400 miles) northwest of Winnipeg. Nearby wildfires have forced mandatory evacuations and power outages in communities like Cranberry Portage.

Evacuation centres have been established across Manitoba, but Indigenous leaders expressed concerns about a lack of accommodation for those displaced. Manitoba's Assembly of Chiefs described this as one of the largest evacuations since the 1990s. *—PTI*

- Saskatchewan's Public Safety Agency warned of fluctuating air quality and visibility due to increasing smoke levels

Fires in Nopiming Provincial Park in Manitoba, Canada **PHOTO: MANITOBA GOVERNMENT**

UK hikes military spending; EU readies counter tariffs for US

LONDON, 2 JUNE

The United Kingdom plans to enhance its military capabilities, including the construction of new nuclear-powered attack submarines, in response to escalating threats from Russia. Prime Minister Keir Starmer emphasised the need for to confront these challenges, marking the most significant changes to Britain's defence since the Cold War.

The government's strategic defence review, commissioned by Starmer and led by former Defence Secretary and NATO chief George Robertson, will see the acceptance of all 62 recommendations aimed at fortifying the UK's military across land, air, sea, and cyberspace. Defence Secretary John Healey announced plans for defence spending to reach 2.5 per cent of national income by 2027, with a goal of 3 per cent by 2034, although funding remains uncertain.

Meanwhile, the European Union said it is preparing "countermeasures" against the US after the Trump administration's surprise tariffs on steel rattled global markets and complicated the tariff negotiations. *—PTI*

PHOTO: FREEPIK

Gold climbs by Rs 330 to Rs 98,930/10g

NEW DELHI, 2 JUNE

Gold prices climbed Rs 330 to Rs 98,930 per 10g in the national capital on Monday following a firm trend in the global markets, according to the All India Sarafa Association. Gold of 99.9 per cent purity had closed at Rs 98,600 per 10g on Friday. Gold of 99.5 per cent purity appreciated by Rs 300 to Rs 98,400 per 10g (inclusive of all taxes). It had settled at Rs 98,100 per 10g in the previous market session. Additionally, silver prices rose by Rs 100 to Rs 1,00,100 per kg (inclusive of all taxes) on Monday. On the global front, spot gold jumped USD 59.21 per ounce or 1.80 per cent to USD 3,348.61 per ounce. *—PTI*

Rupee rises 16P to settle at 85.39 against USD

MUMBAI, 2 JUNE

The rupee appreciated 16 paise to settle at 85.39 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday, supported by a weak American currency and on expectations of a further reduction in key interest rate by the Reserve Bank. However, a sharp gain in the local unit was prevented due to volatile equity markets, outflow of foreign funds and higher crude oil prices, forex traders said. RBI's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) will begin the deliberations on its next bi-monthly policy on 4 June and the outcome is scheduled to be announced on 6 June. At the interbank foreign exchange, the domestic unit opened at 85.55 and moved between a high of 85.30 and low of 85.55 against the greenback during the day. On Friday, the rupee ended 7 paise lower at 85.55 against the dollar. *—PTI*

Dairy firms set for 13% revenue growth: Crisil

MUMBAI, 2 JUNE

Dairy companies in India are set to witness an 11–13 per cent revenue growth in FY26, driven by strong demand, higher milk prices, and an increasing share of value-added products (VAP), said Crisil Ratings. Profitability is expected to improve by 20–30 basis points, aided by better realisations and a favourable product mix. VAP, projected to grow 16–18 per cent, now contributes 45 per cent of product mix, up from 40 per cent. Capital expenditure is likely to rise 10 per cent to Rs 3,400 crore, with over 60 per cent focused on VAP expansion. Despite higher debt due to increased capex, credit profiles will remain stable, supported by strong cash flows and healthy balance sheets. A good monsoon and steady milk supply will help keep procurement costs in check. *—PTI*

IndiGo CEO backs India's fair aviation policy

ANEW DELHI, 2 JUNE

IndiGo CEO Pieter Elbers has defended Indian government's "fair and balanced" stance on bilateral flying rights, amidst increasing pressure from foreign carriers seeking expanded access to Indian market. Speaking at IATA Annual General Meeting in New Delhi, Elbers said that just because "one side makes more noise" does not mean they are right. His remarks follow Emirates President Tim Clark's call for open access to India, criticising the long-standing cap of 65,000 weekly seats per side between India and Dubai. IATA Director General Willie Walsh echoed need for balance, highlighting that as Indian carriers expand abroad, reciprocal market access would be essential. India remains one of fast-growing aviation markets, rapidly increasing international operations. *—PTI*

'Tesla not interested in making EV in India'

Trump says Telsa building a factory in India would be unfair

NEW DELHI, 2 JUNE

Global EV giant Tesla is not interested in manufacturing cars in India but keen on establishing showrooms in the country, Union Heavy Industries Minister HD Kumaraswamy said on Monday.

US President Donald Trump has said that if Tesla were to build a factory in India to circumvent that country's tariffs, it would be "unfair" to the US.

The Minister made the remarks at a press conference to announce the unveiling of guidelines for the Scheme to Promote Manufacturing of Electric Cars in India.

"So far they (Tesla) have not shown interest. Tesla representative only participated in the first round of stakeholder discussions for the Scheme to Promote Manufacturing of Electric Cars in India. The company's representative was not part of second and third round of the stakeholder deliberations," an official told PTI.

Tesla CEO billionaire Elon Musk had said in April last year that his visit to India has been delayed due to company's heavy obligations. *—PTI*

GLOBAL CARMAKERS INTERESTED IN MAKING EVS IN INDIA: KUMARASWAMY

NEW DELHI, 2 JUNE

Global carmakers including Mercedes-Benz, Skoda-Volkswagen, Hyundai, and Kia have expressed interest in manufacturing electric vehicles in India, Union Heavy Industries Minister **HD Kumaraswamy** said on Monday. Their interest emerged during discussions between the government and industry stakeholders on the "Scheme to Promote Manufacturing of Electric Passenger Cars in India", for which detailed guidelines were released on Monday. Although the scheme was originally notified on 15 March, 2024, the application process is now expected to open in the coming weeks. – PTI

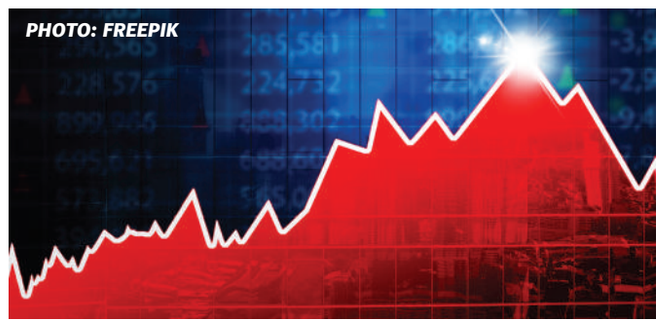


PHOTO: FREEPIK

Sensex ends lower by 77.26 pts

MUMBAI, 2 JUNE

Benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty on Monday ended marginally lower, following sluggish trends in global markets amid renewed global trade concerns.

Besides, the Russian-Ukraine conflict, sharp jump in Brent crude oil prices and foreign fund outflows dented investors' sentiment, experts noted.

After tumbling 796.75 points or 0.97 per cent to 80,654.26 in intra-day trade, the 30-share BSE Sensex witnessed volatile trends and later ended 77.26 points or 0.09 per cent lower at 81,373.75.

The NSE Nifty dipped 34.10 points or 0.14 per cent to settle at 24,716.60. During the day, it dropped 224.55 points or 0.90 per cent to 24,526.15.

From the Sensex firms, Tech Mahindra, Tata Steel, Tata Motors, Titan, HDFC Bank, IndusInd Bank, Infosys and Kotak Mahindra Bank were among the biggest laggards.

On the other hand, Adani Ports, Mahindra & Mahindra, Power Grid, Eternal and Hindustan Unilever were among the gainers.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 6,449.74 crore on Friday, according to exchange data.

US President Donald Trump on Friday said he would double tariffs on steel and aluminium to 50 per cent.

Meanwhile, India's manufacturing sector growth fell to a three-month low in May, restricted by inflationary pressures, softer demand and heightened geopolitical conditions, a monthly survey said on Monday.

The seasonally adjusted HSBC India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) fell from 58.2 in April to 57.6 in May, highlighting the weakest improvement in operating conditions since February.

Gross GST collections remained above the Rs 2 trillion mark for the second straight month, rising 16.4 per cent in May to over Rs 2.01 lakh crore. *—PTI*

AAI says US's double tariff will hurt sector

NEW DELHI, 2 JUNE

The Aluminium Association of India (AAI) has voiced serious concerns over US President Donald Trump's recent announcement to double tariffs on aluminium imports. Effective from 4 June, the tariffs will soar from 25 per cent to 50 per cent, placing further strain on Indian manufacturers already grappling with an influx of low-cost imports.

The AAI warns that this steep tariff increase will significantly impact the Indian aluminium sector, which plays a vital role in key industries including defence, aerospace, energy transition, telecommunications, power, and construction.

The association highlighted that both primary aluminium and low-quality scrap are flooding the market, creating a surplus that threatens to depress domestic prices and jeopardise the sustainability of local producers.

BK Bhatia, Director General of the Federation of Indian Mineral Industries, pointed out that the US market accounts for nearly USD 946 million of India's aluminium exports.

While the Indian government recently announced a 12 per cent provisional safeguard duty on certain steel imports, the AAI has urged for similar protective measures for the aluminium industry. With domestic investments exceeding Rs 1.5 lakh crore to establish a primary aluminium capacity of 4.2 million tonnes per annum, the industry is increasingly anxious about its future viability.

The proposed tariff increase falls under Section 232 of the US Trade Expansion Act of 1962, which enables the President to impose trade restrictions citing national security concerns. *–PTI*

- BK Bhatia, Director General of Federation of Indian Mineral Industries, pointed out that US market accounts for nearly $946 million of India's aluminium exports.

AI-ML hiring up 25%, IT sector down 5%

NEW DELHI, 2 JUNE

The Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning (AI/ML) sector has recorded a remarkable 25 per cent year-on-year hiring growth in May 2025, contrasting sharply with a 5 per cent decline in job opportunities across the wider Information Technology sector, according to the latest Naukri JobSpeak report.

Pawan Goyal, Chief Business Officer of Naukri, noted this sustained momentum in AI/ML hiring, particularly in metropolitan areas, alongside a consistent demand for senior professionals, a trend that has persisted over the past year.

Despite an overall stable job market in May, certain industries demonstrated resilience; real estate witnessed a 5 per cent increase, while the insurance sector grew by 6 per cent. Conversely, sectors such as Retail, Telecom/ISP, and Banking, Finance & Broking experienced declines of 8 to 9 per cent. Notably, unicorns in the Banking and Financial Services sector ramped up hiring by an impressive 29 per cent.

Regional trends showed Hyderabad and Kochi benefitting from hiring growth of 7 per cent and 8 per cent, respectively, primarily driven by the demand for senior-level professionals with over 16 years of experience. Pune also saw a 4 per cent overall hiring increase, largely attributed to a significant 26 per cent rise in employment opportunities at startups.

Naukri JobSpeak index evaluates hiring trends based on new job listings, applications, and recruiter activity on its platform, offering insights into various industries, cities, and experience levels. *—PTI*

PHOTO: FREEPIK

Rs 2,000 notes still circulating: RBI

MUMBAI, 2 JUNE

Official data released on Monday reveals that Rs 2000 notes worth Rs 6,181 crore remain in circulation, nearly two years after the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced their withdrawal. As of 19 May, 2023, the RBI stated that the total value of Rs 2000 banknotes in circulation stood at Rs 3.56 lakh crore, with this figure diminishing to Rs 6,181 crore by 31 May 2025.

Despite the withdrawal process, Rs 2000 banknotes continue to be legal tender. The RBI indicated that a significant 98.26 per cent of these banknotes have been returned since the initial withdrawal announcement.

Deposits and exchanges of Rs 2000 notes were facilitated at bank branches until 7 October 2023. However, people can still deposit these notes at the 19 RBI issue offices across the country. Since 9 October 2023, the RBI's issue offices have been accepting Rs 2000 notes from individuals and entities for deposit into their bank accounts.

Additionally, the public can send Rs 2000 notes via India Post from any post office to an RBI issue office for account credit. Despite the withdrawal, the RBI's measures provide continued support for the handling of Rs 2000 notes within the banking system. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

India, US seek trade pact for more market access: Goyal

PARIS, 2 JUNE

India and the US are actively collaborating on a Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) aimed at enhancing market access for each other's businesses, according to Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal. In February, US President Donald Trump and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled plans to negotiate the initial phase of the BTA, targeting a doubling of bilateral trade to USD 500 billion by 2030, up from USD 191 billion.

Goyal, who is in France for talks with leaders and business representatives, expressed confidence in the countries' commitment to resolve trade issues through dialogue. He noted the potential impact of the US decision to double tariffs on steel and aluminium, which could affect Indian exporters, especially in value-added sectors. *—PTI*

UPI transactions hit record high of Rs 25.14L cr

NEW DELHI, 2 JUNE

Transactions through the popular Unified Payments Interface (UPI) touched a record high of Rs 25.14 lakh crore in May, recording a growth of 5 per cent over the preceding month, according to data released by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).

The UPI transaction value was Rs 23.94 lakh crore in April.

In terms of volume, 1,867.7 crore transactions were done in May against 1,789.3 crore in the previous month.

NPCI said the value of the transactions worked at Rs 25.14 lakh crore in May against Rs 20.44 lakh crore in the same month a year ago, registering a growth of 23 per cent growth on an annual basis.

The daily transactions during the month averaged Rs 81,106 crore, up 1.5 per cent.

The record-breaking milestone of 1,868 crore UPI transactions worth Rs 25.14 lakh crore in May 2025 is a resounding testament to India's growing digital payment ecosystem and the deepening trust in UPI as a preferred mode of transaction, Spice Money founder and CEO Dilip Modi said in a statement. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

EMBRAER SEES LOTS OF OPPORTUNITIES IN INDIA

PHOTO: FREEPIK

NEW DELHI, 2 JUNE

Embraer sees a lot of opportunities in India in the commercial and business jets as well as military aircraft and eVTOL segments, its CEO Francisco Gomes Neto has said as the Brazilian seeks to strengthen its foot print in the fast growing Indian market.

Besides, the company is in talks with IndiGo and Air India to explore the possibility of selling its E-2 aircraft, which can have up to 146 seats. To tap the opportunities, Embraer has set up a fully-owned Indian subsidiary with its corporate office in the national capital. In an exclusive interview to PTI in the national capital, Neto said the company will put in place a procurement team to explore opportunities in the Indian supply chain and look at the possibility of procuring components and services from India.

The company is hiring people in India for government relations, communications, procurement and engineering, sales and marketing teams.

Currently, there are nearly 50 Embraer aircraft and 11 aircraft types operating in India across commercial and business aviation, and defence segments. In the civilian aircraft space, Embraer planes are operated by regional carrier Star Air and entities are also using the company's business jets.

Embraer has a significant presence in the Indian defence space. *—PTI*

LOWER BY 40%

Flying cost falls after 42 years: IATA DG

NEW DELHI, 2 JUNE

The real cost of flying has fallen 40 per cent than a decade ago despite rising cost and tax challenges, global airlines' grouping IATA's Director General Willie Walsh said on Monday as the number of air travellers is projected to cross 5 billion annually.

At the IATA annual general meeting, which is taking place in India after 42 years, Walsh also said the rate of growth in the airlines' industry has slowed down as a result of supply chain issues.

The International Air Transport Association (IATA), which represents over 350 carriers globally, on Monday projected that airlines will make a profit of USD 36 billion on USD 979 billion revenues.

The expected profit this year translates to a net margin of 3.7 per cent or USD 7.20 net profit per passenger.

Despite ever increasing cost and tax challenges, he said the real cost of flying is 40 per cent less than a decade ago.

India is one of the fastest growing civil aviation markets in the world and air traffic demand is on the rise while there have been concerns about airfare trajectory.

Meanwhile, referring to the supply chain issues that have been impacting the aviation industry, the IATA DG said that regarding aircraft, the manufacturing sector is failing badly.

According to the IATA DG, bad regulation can destroy value and stand in the way of affordability. *—PTI*

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PHOTO: X

Kohli's aggression, Hardik's resilience are inspiring: Ankur

AHMEDABAD, 2 JUNE

An ardent fan of Virat Kohli and Hardik Pandya, rising Indian paddler Ankur Bhattacharjee once aspired to be a cricketer before shifting to table tennis, but his love for cricket remains. The 18-year-old is a big admirer of Kohli's aggression and Hardik's mental strength and wants to imbibe those qualities into his game. "There is a lot of aggression in my game, so I admire Virat Kohli's aggressive attitude. I also love Hardik Pandya's mental strength. I follow both a lot and try to bring their qualities into my game," Ankur told PTI.—*PTI*

PHOTO: X

British rider Simon Yates wins elusive Giro d'Italia title

ROME, 2 JUNE

British rider Simon Yates cruised to overall victory in the Giro d'Italia finally winning the race that had eluded him so often. After attacking on the gravel-road climb to take the pink jersey in the penultimate stage on Saturday, Yates finished nearly four minutes ahead of runner-up Isaac Del Toro, the 21-year-old Mexican who wore pink for 10 days before Yates took control. It's the second Grand Tour title for Yates after he won the Spanish Vuelta in 2018. "It's a defining moment of my career, there's no doubt about that," Yates said.—*PTI*

ICC Women's ODI WC: Pakistan not to play in India

NEW DELHI, 2 JUNE

The International Cricket Council (ICC) on Monday announced that the upcoming edition of the eight-team women's ODI World Cup will take place from 30 September to 2 November across five venues in India and Sri Lanka. The M. Chinnaswamy Stadium (Bengaluru), ACA Stadium (Guwahati), Holkar Stadium (Indore), ACA-VDCA Stadium (Visakhapatnam), and R. Premadasa Stadium (Colombo) are the designated stadiums for the tournament. The Sri Lankan capital will be organising all games featuring Pakistan. The event will commence in Bengaluru with India playing the first game. The venues for the knockouts will depend on Pakistan's qualification, as two alternative venues have been identified for one semifinal and the final. —*PTI*

India women's hockey team loses 2-4 to Argentin

ROSARIO, 2 JUNE

The Indian junior women's hockey team ended its campaign at the Four Nations Tournament with a 2-4 defeat to hosts Argentina here. Kanika (11', 45') struck twice for India, continuing her impressive run of form in the competition. The game began at a quick pace, with four goals scored in the first quarter alone. Argentina got off to a flying start as Sol Guignet Gunazu (5') opened the scoring. Just minutes later, Sol Ollala De Labra (7') doubled the lead, putting the home side firmly in control. India pulled one back in the 11th minute through Kanika, who showed sharp awareness to reduce the deficit. However, Argentina responded quickly, with Milagros restoring the two-goal cushion in the 13th minute.—*PTI*

RCB vs PBKS: Kohli's last chance to win IPL title

Iyer is the only cricketer in the last 18 years to have led 3 different teams in IPL finals

AHMEDABAD, 2 JUNE

Kohli has given a lot of years to RCB, we need to do our best for him: Patidar

Virat Kohli has given 18 years of his senior cricket career to Royal Challengers Bengaluru and their first-time skipper Rajat Patidar understands what it would mean for the team to win the coveted Indian Premier League title for one of the country's bona fide cricket legends.

In all, RCB have played a total of three finals in 2009, 2011, and 2016 and have ended up on the losing side in each of the summit clashes with Kohli's individual brilliance not being enough for them to end their title drought.

The summit clash here at the Narendra Modi Stadium could see thousands of fans donning jersey No.18 to support Kohli, who is in an IPL final for the fourth time overall.

Kohli (614 runs) has gone about his business like every other year, piling up runs at the top and continuing to lay platforms, but what has made the difference for RCB is that there's a lot more substance to their batting beyond the superstar. Kohli has not been the only one to carry the focus and attention this year, rather, he has quietly gone about his business in fortifying for RCB. Phil Salt is a perfect foil for the Indian superstar who goes all-out in his attack, while Mayank Agarwal, skipper Rajat Patidar, and Jitesh Sharma are the trusted lieutenants of that batting line-up.

It is, therefore, not a surprise to see Iyer being the only cricketer in the 18-year history of the tournament to have led three different teams in IPL finals, with Delhi Capitals being the third.

Iyer's perseverance is not the only quality that stands out for the 30-year-old Punjab captain, but also the fact that he remains as hungry to win this IPL as he was when he began the journey with the franchise a few months ago.

Illustration by the IPL social media handle depicting the IPL 2025 final

PHOTO: X/@IPL

Hardik Pandya gives brutally honest verdict on MI after IPL 2025 exit

Mumbai Indians captain Hardik Pandya praised Punjab Kings skipper Shreyas Iyer's batting while acknowledging his team's inability to execute their bowling strategy effectively. Pandya acknowledged that the decision-making during the crucial overs could have been better, specifically mentioning Jasprit Bumrah's under-utilisation at a key moment. "Especially Shreyas, the way he batted, he took his chances and played well. It was a par score, but it needed great execution from the bowling unit. They were calm and put us under pressure, and we were not able to execute the way we wanted. —*PTI*

RCB VS PBKS

HEAD TO HEAD	
PLAYED:	36
RCB Won:	18
PBKS Won:	18

RCB vs PBKS Match starts at 7.30 pm IST

Shreyas Iyer, Hardik Pandya fined for slow over rate

AHMEDABAD, 2 JUNE

Punjab Kings captain Shreyas Iyer and Mumbai Indians skipper Hardik Pandya have been fined for their respective teams' slow over-rate during the IPL Qualifier 2 here.

While Iyer was fined Rs 24 lakh as it was his team's second offence of the season under the IPL's Code of Conduct, Pandya was docked Rs 30 lakh for the third time offender.

"As it was his team's second offence of the season under the IPL's Code of Conduct relating to minimum over-rate offences, Iyer was fined INR 24 lakhs," an IPL statement read.

"Mumbai Indians captain Hardik Pandya has also been fined after his team maintained a slow over rate. As it was his team's third offence of the season under the IPL's Code of Conduct relating to minimum over-rate offences, Pandya was fined INR 30 Lakh," it added.

The rest of the members of the PBKS playing XI were each fined either Rs 6 lakh or 25 per cent of their respective match fees, whichever is lesser, while MI players were penalised Rs 12 lakh or 50 per cent of their match fees. —*PTI*

Rajeev Shukla set to become acting BCCI president

NEW DELHI, 2 JUNE

Veteran cricket administrator Rajeev Shukla is set to replace Roger Binny as BCCI president in an interim capacity after the latter turns 70 next month, BCCI sources told PTI on Monday.

Binny, who had replaced Sourav Ganguly as the Board president in 2022, turns 70 on July 19, crossing the age-limit threshold for a BCCI office-bearer.

Shukla, 65, is currently serving as the BCCI vice-president, a post he has held since 2020.

He would be the active BCCI chief until fresh elections are held during the body's AGM in September.

"As per convention, the senior-most office-bearer takes charge in such a scenario. He (Shukla) will perform that role until fresh elections are held in September," said a BCCI source. The Rajya Sabha MP from the Congress party has previously also served as the chairman of the Indian Premier League (IPL). Most recently, C K Khanna had served as the acting BCCI president from 2017 to 2019 during the tenure of the Supreme Court-appointed Committee of Administrators that governed the board for 33 months. —*PTI*

Maxwell retires from ODIs

MELBOURNE, 2 JUNE

Australian all-rounder Glenn Maxwell on Monday retired from ODIs to focus on next year's T20 World Cup in India and Sri Lanka, saying that he did not want to "play for selfish reasons" given how his body has been struggling to hold up.

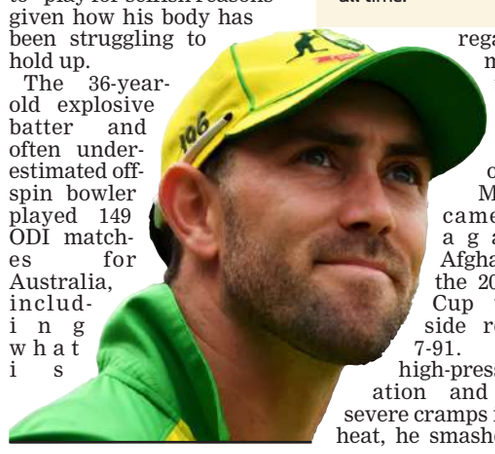
The 36-year-old explosive batter and often underestimated off-spin bowler played 149 ODI matches for Australia, including what is regarded by many as the greatest one-day innings of all time. Maxwell came in against Afghanistan at the 2023 World Cup with his side reeling at 7-91. In a high-pressure situation and battling severe cramps in searing heat, he smashed 201 off just 128 balls to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat. Australia went on to win the World Cup, beating favourites India in Ahmedabad.

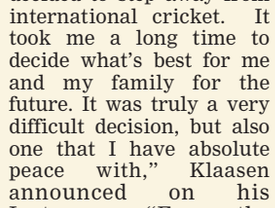
"I felt like I was letting the team down a little bit with how the body was reacting to the conditions. I had a good chat with (Chair of Selectors) George Bailey, and I asked him what his thoughts were going forward," he told the 'Final Word Podcast'.

"We talked about the 2027 World Cup and I said to him 'I don't think I am going to make that, it's time to start planning for people in my position to have a crack at it and make the position their own'."

Maxwell had recently returned from an IPL stint with Punjab Kings that was cut short by a broken finger. —*PTI*

> The 36-year-old explosive batter and often underestimated off-spin bowler played 149 ODI matches for Australia, including what is regarded by many as the greatest one-day innings of all time.





Klaasen announces retirement from intl cricket

CAPE TOWN, 2 JUNE

South African power-hitter Heinrich Klaasen on Monday announced his retirement from all forms of international cricket with immediate effect as he aims to strike a work-life balance, prioritising his commitments in franchise leagues across the globe.

The 33-year-old Klaasen had announced his retirement from Test cricket in January last year and has now also decided to quit the white ball formats, having represented the Proteas in 4 Tests, 60 ODIs, and 58 T20Is in which he scored 2764 runs. "It is a sad day for me as I announce that I have decided to step away from international cricket. It took me a long time to decide what's best for me and my family for the future. It was truly a very difficult decision, but also one that I have absolute peace with," Klaasen announced on his Instagram. "From the first day, it was the biggest privilege representing my country, and it was everything that I have worked for and dreamed about as a young boy," Klaasen said in his emotional statement. —*PTI*

Novak Djokovic clocks his 100th win

ROME, 2 JUNE

Novak Djokovic claimed his 100th win at the French Open on Monday. The Serbian tennis star attained the record with his victory over Cameron Norrie in the 4th round of the 2025 French Open on Court Philippe-Chatrier. Djokovic won the contest 6-2, 6-3, 6-2 to reach the quarter-finals.

Djokovic is now the 2nd player after Rafael Nadal (112) with 100-plus wins at Roland Garros.

Zverev into quarters as Griekspoor retires hurt

Alexander Zverev secured a place in his seventh French Open quarter-final on Monday as his last-16 opponent, Tallon Griekspoor, retired injured in the second set. The German third seed, who lost to Carlos Alcaraz in last year's final, was leading 6-4, 3-0 when Dutchman Griekspoor called it quits after just 51 minutes on Court Suzanne Lenglen. "Unfortunately, this morning in the warm-up... I pulled my abdominal muscle, which made me not serve fully and not able to compete the way I would like," said Griekspoor, who was playing in the fourth round of a major for the first time.

Gauff sails into quarter-finals

World number two Coco Gauff continued her pursuit of a first French Open singles title with another impressive straight-sets victory to reach the quarter-finals.

The American, 21, dismantled Russian 20th seed Ekaterina Alexandrova 6-0, 7-5 in Paris. The opening set lasted 29 minutes, with Gauff dropping just five points across the first five games. It is the fifth consecutive year that 2022 runner-up Gauff has reached the quarter-finals at Roland Garros.

Key's book spot in quarter-finals

Madison Keys moved into the quarter-finals of Roland-Garros by beating Hailey Baptiste 6-3, 7-5. It was a relatively straightforward afternoon for the Australian Open champion, who broke three times in total while being broken only once in reply. It is the third Roland-Garros quarter-final of Keys' career, as she looks to back up her maiden major triumph in Melbourne at the beginning of the year with a first clay-court Grand Slam title in Paris. —*PTI*

DOPING OFFENDERS

India continues to be second in AIU's global list

NEW DELHI, 2 JUNE

India continued to occupy the second spot in the latest global list of track-and-field athletes ineligible to compete due to doping offences, the Athletics Integrity Unit (AIU) has revealed.

India has 128 athletes in the list released by AIU on May 31, with Kenya (134) on top. The list also includes athletes serving a period of ineligibility as a result of national level cases and decisions.

The AIU has jurisdiction over international-level athletes and their support persons.

For many years, India has been among the countries with the highest number of dope offenders, and top officials of the Athletics Federation of India (AFI) have voiced concern that the country could be banned if the trend continues.

PHOTO:PTI

In May, the AIU handed sanctions to 14 athletes, out of which five were Kenyans and three were from India.

On the recommendation of a high-powered committee, the AFI had decided to set up an anti-doping cell to track down the coaches and training centres suspected to be involved in doping.

Recently, the AFI had made it mandatory for all the coaches -- qualified and unqualified -- in the country to register on its portal from this season onwards if they want to continue to train athletes to take part in competitions under the national body.

The AIU was established by World Athletics to combat doping and address other forms of ethical misconduct in the sport of athletics. —*PTI*

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Hamilton passed by Leclerc and Hulkenberg

MONTMELO, 2 JUNE

Lewis Hamilton's frustrating debut season with Ferrari hit a new low point during the Spanish Grand Prix.

A sixth-placed finish wasn't bad, even for a seven-time world champion.But Hamilton again finished behind teammate Charles Leclerc, who was third, and had to endure his team telling him to get out of the way for Leclerc. Hamilton was blocking the much faster Leclerc over several early laps until the team order came over the radio.

Verstappen blames frustration for a move that was not right

Max Verstappen said Monday that frustration caused "a move that was not right and shouldn't have happened", a day after he initially seemed unrepentant over his collision with George Russell at Formula 1's Spanish Grand Prix. Before the collision, Verstappen had been asked by his Red Bull team to give up a place to Russell. It followed an earlier incident between the two drivers when Russell had tried to get past Verstappen, who went off the track. —PTI